



B 000 016 852 6

English  
Wit and Humor

CLASSIFIED UNDER APPROPRIATE SUBJECT  
HEADINGS, WITH, IN MANY CASES, A  
REFERENCE TO A TABLE OF AUTHORS

PHILADELPHIA

GEORGE W. JACOBS & CO.

PUBLISHERS



FN  
175  
E52

## Preface

“ENGLISH WIT AND HUMOR” is a compilation of some of the best specimens of wit and humor contained in the language, and the most brilliant examples of wit will be found, upon examination, to have been those which were unpremeditated, and which were the result of the contact of two minds upon an unexpected subject; while the best specimens of humor will be seen to be those in which the humor is unconscious. One example of the latter came to the notice of the compiler after the text of this booklet was printed, and which is too good to be lost. He was talking to the manager of a large bookselling establishment in London, when one of the assistants, who had been asked by a customer for a child’s book, took up a copy of “Robinson Crusoe” and said to the manager, “Please, sir, is this a child’s book?” The latter admitted that this was *hard* on the literary talent of the establishment. But, reader, pass in!

W. H. Howe

## List of Known Works and Authorities Quoted

(*Indicated in the text by corresponding numbers*)

- 1 *Wit and Humor* . . . (SHIRLEY BROOKS)
- 2 . . . . . (SYDNEY SMITH)
- 3 *Broad Grins* . . . (MAURICE DAVIES)
- 4 . . . . . (DOUGLAS JERROLD)
- 5 . . . . . (OLIVER GOLDSMITH)
- 6 . . . . . ("READING MERCURY")
- 7 *Fragments of Classical Fun* . . . . . } (MAURICE DAVIES)
- 8 *National Fun* . . . . . }
- 9 *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson* (MRS. PIOZZI)
- 10 . . . . . (W. WILBERFORCE)
- 11 *Anecdotes of the Clergy* . (JACOB LARWOOD)
- 12 . . . . . ("CHAMBERS' BOOK OF DAYS")
- 13 *Life of Pitt* . . . . . (EARL STANHOPE)
- 14 . . . . . ("BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE")
- 15 *Life of Archbishop Whateley* . . . . . (FITZPATRICK)
- 16 . . . . . ("PALL MALL GAZETTE")
- 17 . . . . . ("THE STAR")
- 18 *Life and Character of John Howe* . . . . . (HENRY ROGERS, D.D.)
- 19 . . . . . (BUCKLE)

20 . . . . . (W. H. HOWE)  
 21 . . . . . (LORD MALMESBURY)  
 22 *Life of Dr. Johnson* . (BOSWELL)  
 23 . . . . . ("THE WORLD")  
 24 *Johnsoniana* . . (MURRAY)  
 25 *Life of Douglas Jerrold* (BLANCHARD JERROLD)  
 26 . . . . . (DR. JOHNSON)  
 27 *Life of Reynolds* . (NORTHCOTE)  
 28 . . . . . (THEODORE HOOK)  
 29 *Life of Colman* . (PEAKE)  
 30 . . . . . (ROGER'S TABLE TALK)  
 31 . . . . . (T. HOOD)  
 32 *Fragments of Classical Fun* . . (MAURICE DAVIES)  
 33 . . . . . (DIARY OF T. MOORE)  
 36 . . . . . ("BURNSLEY INDEPENDENT")  
 37 . . . . . (SYDNEY SMITH)  
 38 *All the Year Round* . (CHARLES DICKENS)



# Contents

---

Page	Page
<b>A Bid at an Auction</b> . . . . .	<b>159</b>
<b>A Bishop on Squinting</b> . . . . .	<b>156</b>
<b>A Bishop Surprised</b> . . . . .	<b>51</b>
<b>A "Bull" in a Pulpit</b> . . . . .	<b>53</b>
<b>A Carefully Trained</b>	
Witness . . . . .	106
<b>A Cautious Referee</b> . . . . .	<b>60</b>
<b>A Chat on Blindness</b> . . . . .	<b>74</b>
<b>A Child proving his</b>	
Ability to use a Dinn-	
er Knife . . . . .	83
<b>A Child Thrust</b> . . . . .	<b>95</b>
<b>A Child's Definition of</b>	
Happiness . . . . .	107
<b>A Child's Idea of a</b>	
" Sister of Charity "	82
<b>A Church Living in the</b>	
Nineteenth Century	167
<b>A Clever Coachman</b> . . . . .	<b>57</b>
<b>A Clever Juror</b> . . . . .	<b>112</b>
<b>A Cock that couldn't</b>	
Crow . . . . .	169
<b>A Collision—Illustrated</b>	122
<b>A Commission Agent</b>	
as a Purchaser . . . . .	91
<b>A Conservative "Zoo"</b> . . . . .	<b>19</b>
<b>A Consistent Preacher</b> . . . . .	<b>48</b>
<b>A Consumptive Patient</b> . . . . .	<b>89</b>
<b>A Convincing Rejoin-</b>	
der . . . . .	42
<b>A Cool Reception</b> . . . . .	85
<b>A Curious Account</b> . . . . .	41
<b>A Cutting Answer</b> . . . . .	114
<b>A Day after "the Fair"</b> . . . . .	61
<b>A Dead Letter</b> . . . . .	113
<b>A Distinction</b> . . . . .	74
<b>A Distinction and a</b>	
Difference . . . . .	77
<b>A Double Disgrace</b> . . . . .	123
<b>A Double-barreled An-</b>	
swer . . . . .	50
<b>A Doubtful Apology</b> . . . . .	89
<b>"A Fellow Feeling</b>	
makes us Wondrous	
Kind" . . . . .	93
<b>A Fool's Knowledge</b>	
and Ignorance . . . . .	46
<b>A Forget-Me-Not</b> . . . . .	116
<b>A "Friendly" Attitude</b> . . . . .	138
<b>A Funny Announce-</b>	
ment . . . . .	139
<b>A Gallant Schoolboy's</b>	
Clever Toast . . . . .	207
<b>A Good Conundrum</b> . . . . .	108
<b>A Good "Judge"—in</b>	
more Senses than	
One . . . . .	173
<b>A Good Judge of Ser-</b>	
mons . . . . .	170
<b>A Good Move</b> . . . . .	86
<b>A Good Representative</b> . . . . .	67
<b>A Good Shot</b> . . . . .	93
<b>A Greater Reform than</b>	
"The Reformation" . . . . .	32
<b>A Genuine "Turner"</b> . . . . .	22
<b>A Grim and Witty</b>	
Description of the	
Experience of Some	
Wives . . . . .	193
<b>A Heavy Charge</b> . . . . .	34
<b>A Highwayman who</b>	
Failed in Business . . . . .	52
<b>"A Host in Himself" is</b>	
Sometimes Expен-	
sive . . . . .	81
<b>A Humorous "Cabby"</b> . . . . .	96
<b>A Keen Judge</b> . . . . .	192
<b>A Keen Request</b> . . . . .	129
<b>A Keen Thrust</b> . . . . .	155
<b>A Lawyer's Fee</b> . . . . .	131
<b>A Lesson on Passive</b>	
Verbs . . . . .	127
<b>A Lesson to Clients</b> . . . . .	108
<b>A Little Girl's Idea of</b>	
"Cash" . . . . .	77
<b>"A Little Knowledge</b>	
is a Dangerous	
Thing" . . . . .	83
<b>A Little Previous</b> . . . . .	48
<b>A Little Swearing</b> . . . . .	147

	Page		Page
<b>A Lord's Reason for Seeking the Lost Ten Tribes . . . . .</b>	198	<b>A Sense of Unworthiness . . . . .</b>	17
<b>A Madman Saved from Starvation by a Doctor's Wit . . . . .</b>	201	<b>A Sense of Loneliness . . . . .</b>	44
<b>A Materialistic Nobleman . . . . .</b>	162	<b>A Sexton in Trouble . . . . .</b>	14
<b>A Methodical Maniac . . . . .</b>	182	<b>A Skeleton Account Collector . . . . .</b>	98
<b>A Methodical Organ-Blower . . . . .</b>	90	<b>A Snob Wittily Snubbed . . . . .</b>	96
<b>A Musical Wedding . . . . .</b>	156	<b>"A Stranger, and Ye Took Me In!" . . . . .</b>	158
<b>A New "Line" for Publishers . . . . .</b>	43	<b>A Study in Natural History . . . . .</b>	167
<b>A New Rhyme to an Old Line . . . . .</b>	47	<b>A Thorny Subject . . . . .</b>	100
<b>A New Trinity . . . . .</b>	45	<b>A Trade Distinction, with Little Difference . . . . .</b>	141
<b>A Novelty in the Way of a Loan . . . . .</b>	116	<b>A Tribute to Scotch Frugality . . . . .</b>	209
<b>A Pennyworth of Figs . . . . .</b>	144	<b>A Tribute to Scotch Thrift . . . . .</b>	186
<b>A "Personal" Illustration . . . . .</b>	180	<b>A True Bishop . . . . .</b>	157
<b>A Pointed Question and a Rough Answer . . . . .</b>	182	<b>A Typical Wooer . . . . .</b>	207
<b>A Possible Explanation of Changed Opinions . . . . .</b>	160	<b>A Well-prepared "Brief" . . . . .</b>	96
<b>A Prayer which Could Not Be Answered . . . . .</b>	179	<b>A Well-timed "Grace" . . . . .</b>	112
<b>A Pretty Retort . . . . .</b>	145	<b>A Well-timed Reply . . . . .</b>	145
<b>A Prisoner Pleading for His Lawyer . . . . .</b>	214	<b>A Wife's Retort . . . . .</b>	127
<b>A Procrastinating Wit . . . . .</b>	162	<b>A Witty Cleric and an Aged Bridegroom . . . . .</b>	127
<b>A Promise Defined, Sought and Obtained . . . . .</b>	197	<b>A Witty Dean Checkmated . . . . .</b>	105
<b>A Proof that Adam and Eve were English . . . . .</b>	51	<b>A Witty Decision . . . . .</b>	160
<b>A Quaker's Impatience to See His Visitor "Again" . . . . .</b>	180	<b>A Witty Definition of Tact . . . . .</b>	195
<b>A Qualifying Proposal . . . . .</b>	141	<b>A Witty Description of a Wedding . . . . .</b>	176
<b>A Question which Needed No Answer . . . . .</b>	192	<b>A Witty Drunkard . . . . .</b>	181
<b>A Recognized Need . . . . .</b>	182	<b>A Witty Remark on Posternity . . . . .</b>	88
<b>A Rejected Lover's Rebuke . . . . .</b>	51	<b>A Woman's Reason for Preferring Extempore Preaching . . . . .</b>	108
<b>A Retort Not Understood—Perhaps . . . . .</b>	144	<b>"Abstract" and "Concrete" . . . . .</b>	67
<b>A Sailor's Explanation of Etiquette . . . . .</b>	139	<b>Accommodating His Auditor . . . . .</b>	36
<b>A School for Adults . . . . .</b>	204	<b>Accounting for His Baldness . . . . .</b>	73
<b>A Searching Question . . . . .</b>	69	<b>Advantages of Occasionally Reading the Bible . . . . .</b>	84
<b>A Second St. Paul—in Some Things . . . . .</b>	98	<b>Afraid to Venture . . . . .</b>	140
		<b>"Agricultural" Boys . . . . .</b>	210
		<b>"All But!" . . . . .</b>	83
		<b>"Almost Persuaded" to "Make a Christian of Him" . . . . .</b>	159

## Contents

9

Page	Page		
"Also" and "Like-wise"—A "Friendly" Exposition . . . . .	142	Any Change Must Be an Improvement . . . . .	145
Amusing Tithe Story . . . . .	39	Applied Agnosticism . . . . .	18
An Accommodating Exciseman . . . . .	109	Applying the Sermon . . . . .	74
An Answer by Return . . . . .	100	Appropriate Reproof of One Accustomed to go Mooning About . . . . .	94
An Apprentice and Early Rising . . . . .	126	As Green as Two Peas . . . . .	198
An Appropriate Description . . . . .	32	At Home Everywhere but at Home . . . . .	168
An Apt Scripture Quotation . . . . .	148	"At Home on Thursdays" . . . . .	120
An Ecclesiastical Comforter . . . . .	20	At One Time, Wise—At Another, Otherwise . . . . .	161
An Effective Peroration . . . . .	54	Attending to Each Other's Faults . . . . .	101
An Englishman's Remark on a Scotchman's Tenacity . . . . .	155	Beginning Too Early . . . . .	141
An Equitable Exchange . . . . .	49	Bishop Atterbury's Pad . . . . .	136
An Excellent Memory, or "Remembering to do Good" . . . . .	146	Bishop Law's Rebuke of an Indolent Clergyman . . . . .	153
An Explicit and Exact Witness . . . . .	49	"Blindness" Explained . . . . .	34
An Exposed Intellect . . . . .	216	Blindness Somewhere . . . . .	94
An Important Pre-nuptial Question . . . . .	41	Boasting of Treasure before a Rothschild . . . . .	141
An Important Question . . . . .	17	Boaz and Ruth . . . . .	75
An Improved Accidental . . . . .	47	Bonner's Humor respecting the Loss of His own Head . . . . .	157
An Insignificant M. P. . . . .	166	Book Lore . . . . .	93
An Inspiring Hearer . . . . .	158	Burning His Idol . . . . .	112
An Old-fashioned Gardener on Scientific Farming . . . . .	192	Bunyan's Test for a False Prophet . . . . .	147
An Open Question . . . . .	182	Calvinists and Tigers . . . . .	60
An Opportunity for Boys of the Right Sort . . . . .	194	Capturing a Deserter Thirty Years after the Offence . . . . .	217
An Opposing Counsel Helping to Find Bail . . . . .	198	Catching Himself Out . . . . .	36
An Organ-grinder's Earnings . . . . .	41	Certain Death Either Way . . . . .	140
An Unanswerable Argument . . . . .	146	"Change" and "Rest" . . . . .	104
An Unanswerable Argument Against Bigamy . . . . .	76	Charles II Floored by Stillingfleet . . . . .	210
An Up and Down Reply . . . . .	148	Charles Kean and His Critic . . . . .	152
Ante - Reformation Days . . . . .	170	Childish Wit and Wisdom . . . . .	101
Anxious to Put in a Good Word . . . . .	215	Clergymen and Cork-screws . . . . .	149
		Clever contrivance to Obtain a Warm Seat . . . . .	215

## Contents

	Page		Page
<b>Club Etiquette—</b>		<b>" Didn't He want to go to Heaven?" . . . . .</b>	<b>147</b>
Learned from Observation . . . . .	183	Difference Between a "Board" and a "Bench" . . . . .	209
Coals or "Coke"? . . . . .	89	Dining Late . . . . .	102
Cobbett and the Goose . . . . .	106	Diplomacy—or Silence in View of Possible Preferment . . . . .	100
Colman's Wit and Humor . . . . .	186	Disraeli's Sense of "Fitness" . . . . .	22
"Coming Home to Roost" . . . . .	90	Division of Labor in observing the Church Calendar . . . . .	183
"Commentators" Disagreeing with the Person . . . . .	143	Division of Labor; or, a Witty Thief . . . . .	133
Consoling His Father . . . . .	84	"Do You Smoke, Sir?" . . . . .	146
Contents of a Kitchen Table Drawer . . . . .	63	Doctor and Patient, and <i>vice versa</i> . . . . .	44
"Contingencies"—Defined . . . . .	20	Doing Credit to His Teacher . . . . .	76
Comparisons are "Hateful" . . . . .	124	Double Meanings . . . . .	23
"Composition and Decomposition" . . . . .	34	Dr. Donne "Undone," but not "Done Up" . . . . .	166
Consolation for an Injured Man . . . . .	175	Dr. Jenner a "Respectable Practitioner" . . . . .	173
Counting the Cost . . . . .	177	Dr. Johnson's Advice on Matrimony . . . . .	135
Curious Coincidences . . . . .	58	Dr. Johnson's Childhood . . . . .	126
Curious Epistle from One Quaker to Another . . . . .	80	Dr. Johnson on Sermon-Hearers . . . . .	129
Curious Letter sent by a Quaker to His Watchmaker . . . . .	114	Drawing on His only Fund—Humor . . . . .	200
Curious Misconception at a Funeral . . . . .	167	Driven from the Garden . . . . .	128
Curious Provision in a Will . . . . .	158	Driving it Home . . . . .	127
Curious Sermons on "What a Good Wife should be" . . . . .	163	<b>Every Man to His Calling</b> . . . . .	163
Cut it Short . . . . .	131	Easily Altered . . . . .	156
Cutting His Comb . . . . .	40	Ecclesiastical Learning in the Time of Charles I . . . . .	202
<b>David and Parnell—a Contrast</b> . . . . .	54	Education . . . . .	166
Daylight! . . . . .	201	Elderly Men not always Wise . . . . .	175
"Dealing" and "Leading" . . . . .	167	Elegy by a Schoolboy . . . . .	65
Dean Sherlock's "Reasons" . . . . .	155	Erskine's Humor . . . . .	194
Defining a False Witness . . . . .	88	Every Little Helps . . . . .	47
Definition of a Pilgrim . . . . .	122	Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit . . . . .	131
Defying and Abusing the Magistrates . . . . .	161	Exceptions from "The Fall" . . . . .	51
Destructive Criticism . . . . .	104		

	Page
<b>Extinguishing a "Spark" . . . .</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Faith and Riches . . . .</b>	<b>84</b>
"Fast" Day . . . . .	220
Fearful of Contagion . . . .	165
Filial Solicitude and Long Life . . . . .	107
"Filing a Bill" . . . . .	156
Finding Time for a Man who had None . . . .	88
Fine Air—but not Fine Enough . . . . .	216
Fishing for a Compliment, and—Getting it	40
Fools are Best Kept Apart . . . . .	85
Forced by His own Wit to Compound . . . .	53
Fragmentary Classical Fun . . . . .	218
From the Sublime to the Ridiculous . . . .	120
Fully qualified to Keep His Promise . . . .	18
<b>Gallant Wit . . . . .</b>	<b>69</b>
Giving a Good Account of His Stewardship . . . .	79
Glad that His Rent was to be "Raised" . . . .	74
Gladstone as a Boy; or, "Coming round to Willie's Opinion" . . . .	33
"Going by" the "Regulator" Coach . . . . .	153
Going to "Star" or "To Starve"? . . . .	180
"Grace before Meat" . . . .	136
"Graceful Criticism" . . . .	149
"Grandfather's Coat" . . . .	147
Granting His Request . . . . .	112
<b>"Half-and-Half" . . . . .</b>	<b>68</b>
Hard on "The Bench" . . . .	101
Hard on the Donkey . . . .	99
Hardly a Coat Left . . . .	130
Hats Blocked while You "Wait" . . . .	172
Hats Off . . . . .	87
Hearing Both Sides . . . .	126
He didn't Know Every-thing . . . . .	148
Henry Russell's Sing-ing . . . . .	168
<b>Here and There,</b>	<b>Page</b>
One . . . . .	124
His Birthday Party . . . .	165
His Own—with Usury . . . .	102
" Hogg's Wash" . . . .	18
Holding for the Rise . . . .	138
Homage to the Scottish Rifles (By a Spiteful Competitor) . . . .	115
Hood's Humor in His Last Illness . . . . .	166
Hope's Triumph over Experience . . . . .	50
How many Commandments are there . . . .	87
How a Preacher both Broke and Kept his Promise . . . . .	211
How the Widow Deceived her Husband's Relatives and —Herself . . . . .	45
How to eat Pineapple . . . .	76
How to get rid of a Nuisance . . . . .	74
How to Treat the Hands . . . .	105
Humbug Defined . . . . .	156
<b>"I cannot bear to say Farewell!" and the Reason why . . . .</b>	<b>195</b>
"I Slept, and O, how Sweet the Dream!" . . . .	193
"I'd Like to be a Parson!" . . . . .	208
Ill-constructed Sentences . . . . .	157
In Return for a Brace of Birds . . . . .	65
Interesting Conundrum—for Asses and Commercial Travellers . . . . .	144
It takes Two to Play an Organ . . . . .	84
<b>Johnson and a Clergyman's Ignorance . . . .</b>	<b>175</b>
Johnson and his Fair Flatterer . . . . .	176
Johnson and Mr. Crawford—An Extinguisher . . . . .	171
Johnson's Confession of Ignorance . . . . .	175

## Contents

Page	Page		
Johnson's Definition of Music . . . . .	215	Making Free with a Judge's Character and Office . . . . .	77
Johnson's Letter to the Earl of Chesterfield . . . . .	178	Making the Most of the Situation . . . . .	77
Johnson's Literary Irony . . . . .	78	Making up with Wit what he Lacked in Stature . . . . .	216
Johnson and "Fools" . . . . .	179	Marriage—A Revenge . . . . .	178
Johnson on "Derangement" . . . . .	197	Marriage Certificates . . . . .	128
Joseph Gillott and Turner . . . . .	195	Matrimony doth Open the Eyes of the Blind . . . . .	128
Justice—Only Delayed	123	Meat or Bones? . . . . .	179
<b>Kemble and the Crying Child . . . . .</b>	<b>44</b>	Ministerial Exchanges . . . . .	138
Kingly Courtesy and Quaker Consistency	193	Modern Commercial Penalties . . . . .	109
<b>Lamb and Coleridge . . . . .</b>	<b>110</b>	"Moods" and "Cases" from a Schooboy's Life . . . . .	139
Lamb and Mince "Sauce" . . . . .	113	More Practical than Patriotic . . . . .	22
"Lapsus Linguae"—or the Dangers of Imitation . . . . .	150	More Witty than Wise . . . . .	128
Lawyer and Clients Known at a Glance	39	Mortifying Simplicity . . . . .	125
Learning the Truth about Himself . . . . .	43	Mr. Spurgeon on Modern Bonnets . . . . .	98
Leaving Room for a Collection and a Correction . . . . .	129	My Wife's Diary . . . . .	61
Lengthening his Days . . . . .	43	N. B.—P. S. . . . .	92
Lengthening his Name by an Ell . . . . .	78	Nathan and David . . . . .	93
Less and Less . . . . .	46	Native Wit <i>versus</i> Norman Blood . . . . .	215
Less Gallant, perhaps, than Accurate . . . . .	91	Necessary Evils . . . . .	110
Letter from a Father in Sunderland to his Son in Newcastle . . . . .	86	"Never Forget the Dear Ones" . . . . .	33
Literary Curiosity . . . . .	64	New Thoughts on an Old Text . . . . .	153
Local Sympathy . . . . .	170	"No Effects" without Causes . . . . .	154
Looking Better when Least Seen . . . . .	197	No Escaping the Collection on that Occasion . . . . .	107
Lord Chesterfield and the Dirty Dishes . . . . .	144	No Inoculation Needed . . . . .	137
Lord North's Drollery . . . . .	70	No "Manners" to Spare . . . . .	106
Ludicrous Blunders . . . . .	66	Non-Convertible Terms . . . . .	99
<b>Magnum Malum . . . . .</b>	<b>134</b>	"Not a Seat to be Had" . . . . .	22
Maiden Speech in the House of Commons . . . . .	72	Not Deaf Enough to go to Concerts . . . . .	111
Make it Look as Well as Possible . . . . .	98	Not "Forever!" . . . . .	110
<b>Obeying Orders . . . . .</b>	<b>177</b>	Not "Home Rule" but "Home Ruin" . . . . .	55
Obliging the Judges . . . . .	35	Notice of Non-Responsibility for a Wife . . . . .	48

Page	Page		
<b>Offering a Premium on Theft . . . . .</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>Probably Money-hunting . . . . .</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Once Quite Enough . . . . .</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>Proclaiming his Ignorance . . . . .</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>One Example in which a Translation is better than an Original . . . . .</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>Promotion and Pride . . . . .</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>One for Jehu and Two for Himself . . . . .</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>Prophecy Fulfilled . . . . .</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>One New Leaf Quite Enough for One Turn . . . . .</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Proving his Words Rather Unexpectedly . . . . .</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>One Thankful — The Other Glad . . . . .</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>Proving that the Earliest Riser was the Greatest Loser . . . . .</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>One Way of Recognizing a Gentleman . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Public School Equity . . . . .</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>'Opeless Helocation . . . . .</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Puritan Wit . . . . .</b>	<b>36</b>
 <b>Palmerston's Humor in His Last Illness . . . . .</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>Putting on the "Finishing Touch" . . . . .</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Patriarchal Longevity Accounted for . . . . .</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>Putney Bridge in Olden Time . . . . .</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Perfection . . . . .</b>	<b>91</b>	 <b>Quaker Wooing . . . . .</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Perhaps it was the Fault of the Absent One . . . . .</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>Qualification for a Lawyer . . . . .</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Perpetual Wits—Perpetual Thieves . . . . .</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Qualification for Burial with Military Honors . . . . .</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Piety which is not Religious . . . . .</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>Quid Pro Quo . . . . .</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Pinning Him to the Literal Meaning . . . . .</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>Quin and the Coxcomb . . . . .</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Piscatorial Discussion at a Musical Party . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Quoting the Father . . . . .</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Pitt and Possible Invasion . . . . .</b>	<b>150</b>	 <b>Rebuking a Preacher and—Repenting . . . . .</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Pitt's Effort of Memory . . . . .</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Referring him to a Good Authority . . . . .</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>Playful Thoughts on Marriage . . . . .</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>Related—by Marriage . . . . .</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>"Playing the Fool" . . . . .</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>Reproving — Directly and Indirectly . . . . .</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Playing the Wrong Organ . . . . .</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>Result of being "Not Under the Law" . . . . .</b>	<b>197</b>
<b>Poetry and Prose . . . . .</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>Rochester's Wit Capped by Charles II's Humor . . . . .</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>Politely Said; but—Left Unsaid — Still More Polite . . . . .</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>Royal Art Critics . . . . .</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Politeness in Prayer . . . . .</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>Royal Precedence . . . . .</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Political Fireworks . . . . .</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>Rude Wit . . . . .</b>	<b>197</b>
<b>Political Ophthalmia and its Cause . . . . .</b>	<b>68</b>	 <b>Sam Deacon's Ugly Carriage . . . . .</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Poverty a Virtue . . . . .</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>Saving Him from His Rashness . . . . .</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Preventing the Scapegrace from Sharing in the Will . . . . .</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>"Saving" the Dinner . . . . .</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Prevention — in this Case—the Next Best Thing to Cure . . . . .</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Scarcity and High Prices . . . . .</b>	<b>155</b>
		<b>Scholastic Wit . . . . .</b>	<b>168</b>
		<b>"Second Childhood" . . . . .</b>	<b>139</b>
		<b>Sectarian Repartee . . . . .</b>	<b>139</b>
		<b>"Seeing Double" . . . . .</b>	<b>136</b>

## Contents

Page	Page		
Seeking Information, and—Finding It . . . . .	17	Sydney Smith's De- scription of the Irish Clergy . . . . .	206
"Sermons in Stone" . . . . .	174	Sydney Smith's Polit- ical Simile . . . . .	120
"Seven" and "Eleven" at Dr. Kitchiner's . . . . .	142		
Shaking Hands at a Duel . . . . .	153	"Take no Thought . . . wherewithal ye shall be Clothed" . . .	135
"Shaving" the Barber . . . . .	80	Taken "Off-Duty" . . . . .	95
"Shaving" Them Both . . . . .	71	Taking Care of the Wrong Key . . . . .	99
She Left Nothing Be- hind . . . . .	33	Taking Him at His Own Price . . . . .	126
Sheridan's Ability Doubted by his Son . . . . .	207	Taking it Cooly . . . . .	34
Shortening Time by Distance . . . . .	92	Teacher <i>versus</i> Pupil . . . . .	125
Silencing a Scoffer . . . . .	111	Temperance (and In- temperance) in Three Words . . . . .	17
Sin and Its Size . . . . .	140	Temptation to Suicide . . . . .	53
Sink-we Seento . . . . .	121	Thackeray Broadening Carlyle's Vision . . . . .	194
Skeleton Humor . . . . .	186	Thankful for Small Mercies . . . . .	119
Skin and Bone <i>versus</i> Flesh and Blood . . . . .	106	The Adulterator's Al- phabet . . . . .	190
Slow and Sure . . . . .	38	The Archbishop and the Archdeacon . . . . .	102
"Smoking"—An Ex- planation . . . . .	119	The Ass was "Mis- sing" . . . . .	80
Solomon's System of Self-defence . . . . .	164	The Bishop, the Boy, and the Banbury Cake . . . . .	95
Something to Show his Friends . . . . .	45	The Cost of a Wife Ac- cording to Scripture . . . . .	78
Splendid Debating Power . . . . .	131	The Dean and the Lunatic . . . . .	113
Sticking at Nothing . . . . .	115	The Domestic Cate- chism . . . . .	97
Stopping a Leaky Gas- pipe . . . . .	20	The First Cake after the Wedding . . . . .	195
Suet or Dripping . . . . .	145	The First Person Singu- lar . . . . .	40
Surnames . . . . .	56	The Fly declining the Spider's Invitation . . . . .	106
Sydney Smith and "A Meeting of the Clergy" . . . . .	153	The "Form" which gives the Rite Mean- ing . . . . .	117
Sydney Smith and his Portrait . . . . .	151	The Gallant Butcher . . . . .	110
Sydney Smith and the Stout Widow . . . . .	115	The Golden Rule . . . . .	123
Sydney Smith on Offi- cial Accuracy ( <i>Coul- eur de "Rose"</i> ) . . . . .	208	The Human Side of Royalty . . . . .	116
Sydney Smith on the Education of Wo- men . . . . .	119	The Infallibility of every Child's "Papa" . . . . .	94
Sydney Smith on the Preaching of the Clergy . . . . .	123		
Sydney Smith's De- scription of Curates	203		

	Page
The Inflexibility of "Habit"—both in Name and Nature	107
The Judge and the Cabman	176
The King, Lord Chesterfield, and—the Devil	148
The Lady and the Play	150
The Lady with Holes in Her Stockings	133
The Letter H	104
The Limit of Debate	46
The Moods and Tenses of the Money Lender	137
The Mud-Fish	69
The Only Reason against Parnell's Retirement	54
The Origin of Evil	199
The Origin of the Term, "The Republic of Letters"	20
The Paley Family Arms	152
The Plural of <i>Egal</i>	68
The Possibilities of Childhood	93
The Power of Emphasis	104
The Prevailing Sense of the House	173
The Promise of the God-Parents	145
The Puritan and the Young Lady's Carls	154
The Quickest Courtship and Marriage on Record	171
The Ruling Passion Strong in—Disappointment	200
The Ship Chaplain's Sermon on Heaven	170
The Shortest Grace	216
The Size of Meanness	158
The Strength of Political Bias	103
The Sweep Turning the Tables on the Parson	79
"The Tongue Can No Man Tame"	170
The Treaty Explained "The Very Worst," Followed by a Still Worse	117
	91
The Worst "Ism" in Christendom	133
The Wrecked Archbishop and the Eleventh Commandment	180
Theodore Hook's Power of Improvisation	218
Thinking "Nothing of It"	176
Thoughts on Book-Borrowing	21
Thoughts on Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	18
Tight-lacing "Good" for Consumption	141
Tom Sheridan's Adventure	211
"Too Many Cooks"	121
Too Tame to be Borne	91
Top and Bottom	60
Translated Fun	132
Transposition!	178
"Trotted Under Foot"	130
True Enough, and Enough, Though True	177
Truth and Patience	36
Twelve Pennyworths for One Shilling	172
Two Alma Maters—Result	124
Two Birds with One Stone	125
Two Boys' "Tall" Talk	78
Two Examples of French Running	81
Two Negatives Imply an Affirmation	103
Unused Possessions	76
Up and "Doing"	108
Using His Wit to Hide His Ignorance	214
Very Small for Its Age	72
Were They Both Insane?	82
What the Sermon was About	133
What the Scotch Cannot Help	23

**Contents**

Page	Page		
What the Waits Ought to Do on Boxing Day . . . . .	214	Why "The Spectator" Excell'd "The Tat- tler" . . . . .	198
What to Do with Medi- cine . . . . .	73	Why They Were Out of Spirits . . . . .	75
What's Often Thought, but Ne'er so Well Expressed . . . . .	94	Wilberforce's Candor . . . . .	135
When an Antagonist is Agreeable . . . . .	60	Willing to Wait . . . . .	46
When is a Saddle a Mule? . . . . .	89	"Wine Office Court": . . . . .	19
When Thirteen is an Unlucky Number . . . . .	89	Wisdom Which Was Acquired — Not Hereditary . . . . .	143
"Where are We?" . . . . .	104	"Wit" and the "Oppo- site" . . . . .	94
Whistling — A Good Temperance Agent . . . . .	134	Wit Defined and Ex- emplified . . . . .	87
Why He Did Not Get Any Pudding . . . . .	88	Withdrawing His Sup- port from the Devil . .	19
Why He Wore the Blue Ribbon . . . . .	82	"Without Knowledge or Understanding" . .	110
Why He Wouldn't Buy Haydn's Music . . . . .	70	Witty Impromptu . . . . .	219
Why the Bailiffs Went Away Without Their Prisoner . . . . .	174	Woman's Position in the Scale of Beauty . .	35
Why the Drunkard Couldn't Get In . . . . .	36	Wordsworth's Mind . .	160
		Wordsworth's Prettiest Production . . . . .	39
		Wrecked on the Coral Reefs . . . . .	42

# English Wit and Humor



## A Sense of Loneliness

"All the world," said an old Quaker to his wife, "is queer, except thee and me—and thee is a little queer."

## Seeking Information, and—Finding It

Coleridge was acknowledged to be a bad rider. One day, riding through a street, he was accosted by a would-be wit: "I say, do you know what happened to Baalam?"

Came the answer sharp and quick: "The same as happened to me. An ass spoke to him!"

## Related—By Marriage

As my wife and I, at the window one day,  
Stood watching a man with a monkey,  
A cart came by, with a "broth of a boy,"  
Who was driving a stout little donkey.  
To my wife I then spoke, by way of a joke,  
"There's a relation of yours in that carriage";  
To which she replied, as the donkey she spied,  
"Ah yes, a relation—BY MARRIAGE!"

## Temperance (and Intemperance) in Three Words

Theodore Hook, when dining with the author of a work called "Three Words to the Drunkard," was asked to review it. "Oh, my dear fellow, that I have already done in three words—*pass the bottle!*"

## An Important Question

Sydney Smith was advised, when ill, to take a morning walk upon an empty stomach. "Upon whose?" was his inquiry. [3]

### Thoughts on Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister

A woman, quarrelling with her husband, told him she believed if she was to die he would marry the devil's daughter. "The law does not allow a man to marry two sisters," replied the tender husband.

---

May a man marry his wife's sister? is a question which can only be properly answered by the sister herself when the widower makes a proposal.

### Applied Agnosticism

"I am an agnostic," remarked a young man, in a proud and dignified tone of voice. "And an agnostic is what?" inquired an elderly gentleman. "An agnostic," replied the smart youth, in a manner full of pity for the old man's ignorance, "an agnostic is a fellow, don't you know, who isn't sure of anything." "I see," was the reply; "but how does it happen that you are so sure you are an agnostic?"

### Fully Qualified to Keep His Promise

The late Mr. Thorold Rogers used to relate an amusing incident of his experience during the 1885 elections. Some of the replies which he received during the canvass were more expressive than polite, and upon one occasion, in response to the stereotyped request, a voter answered indignantly, "No, I won't; I would see you in h— first!" The Professor received the outburst in a very resigned spirit, and meekly replied, "Well, my friend, in case I do get there, I should say that *you will be pretty sure to see me.*" [17]

### "Hogg's Wash"

Here is another story of that racy humor with which the late Professor Thorold Rogers often delighted his friends, and occasionally offended his opponents. Some few years ago, before he lost his seat, he took a great interest in the condition of the Thames, and did what he could to induce Sir James McGarel Hogg, the chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works to improve it; but his efforts were

in vain, and the Professor sought revenge. He went down to the Thames and filled a square bottle with some water that was excellent as a specimen of the objectionable qualities of the river, and he labeled this bottle "Hogg's Wash," and hung it up in the smoking-room of the House of Commons. [16]

### Withdrawing His Support from the Devil

Equally amusing was Mr. Roger's reply to the elector who frankly assured him that he would "vote for the devil first." "Very good, sir, very good," said the stoical Professor; "but in case your friend does not come to the poll, may I hope to be favored with your support?" The retort was both happy and effective, for from that day the voter to whom it was addressed was amongst his most enthusiastic supporters. [17]

### A Conservative "Zoo"

During the contest for the new seat given to the Hornsey division of Middlesex by the Redistribution Act, Sir James McGarel Hogg (the late Lord Magheramorne), the Conservative candidate, was addressing a meeting of the electors. Sir James in his rather random remarks, made statements which Mr. E—H—, a son of a prominent Liberal, felt bound to "question"—and this more than once. Being nettled at this, Sir James made a digression which cost him more than he bargained for. "There is a young man here," said he, pointing at Mr. H—, "who behaves as if he thought he had come to the Zoological Gardens." "Yes, so I have," said Mr. H—, "come to see the Hogg." [20]

### "Wine Office Court"

Douglas Jerrold and a friend had been dining together at "The Old Cheshire Cheese," in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, when, his friend, having taken too much wine, Douglas took him out into the Court for fresh air. Here, however, his friend became sick. Just at that moment a stranger approached and asked Douglas if that was "Wine Office Court." "No," replied Jerrold, "this is wine off his stomach."

**"Contingencies"—Defined**

Theodore Hook used to describe contingencies as "things that never happen." [28]

**An Ecclesiastical Comforter**

Being the first Bishop of New Zealand left England, Sydney Smith, in taking leave, affected to impress upon his friend the dangers of his mission :

" You will find," he said, " in preaching to the cannibals, that their attention, instead of being occupied by the spirit, will be concentrated on the flesh ; for I am told that they never breakfast without a cold missionary on the sideboard."

In shaking hands with the new prelate, as he was leaving the house, Smith added : " Good-bye. We shall never meet again ; but let us hope that you may thoroughly disagree with the savage that eats you." [2]

**The Origin of the Term, "The Republic of Letters"**

Tom Hood suggested that the phrase, "*republic of letters*," was hit upon to insinuate that, taking the whole lot of authors together, they had not a sovereign amongst them.

**Piscatorial Discussion at a Musical Party**

Theodore Hook was at a musical party, at which a young lady attempted to sing a very difficult song, which she gave with exaggerated feeling and a great many blunders.

" Don't you adore her singing ? " asked a gushing old lady, who sat next Hook ; " it's so full of soul."

" Well, madam, for my part," answered the wit, " there seems more of the flounder than the sole about it." [28]

**Stopping a Leaky Gas-pipe**

Jerrold had a friend who was fond of implying in his conversation that he was very well connected, and who frequently referred to "my friend, Lord" *this*,

and "my chum, Lord" *that*. Riding out with Douglas Jerrold one day the conversation turned on fish.

"Ah," said the swell, "d'you know, I was dining at Lord —'s the other evening and I was very much surprised that there was no fish on the table."

"No need to be surprised," said Douglas; that was because they had eaten it all *upstairs*." [4]

### Thoughts on Book-borrowing

Those who have collected books, and whose good nature has prompted them to accommodate their friends with them, will feel the sting at an answer which was made to one who lamented the difficulty which he found in persuading his friends to return the volumes that he lent them.

"Sir," he said, "your acquaintances find, I suppose, that it is easier to retain the books themselves than what is contained in them."

---

An English gentleman has the following quotations on a name plate which he places in every one of his books. At the top it reads: "The wicked borroweth and payeth not again." At the bottom: "Go ye *rather* to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." The beauty of these quotations is that they "hit" none but transgressors, and do not touch any who choose to keep themselves outside their scope, by either buying books or returning those they have borrowed.

The unscrupulousness of some borrowers is no doubt tacitly referred to in the Scripture passage: "Lend, hoping for nothing in return" [20]

---

Sir Walter Scott said that bad arithmeticians were often very good *book-keepers*; and it is the general opinion that more people understand *book-keeping* than *book-returning*. Why there is less shame felt by people who borrow books and forget or neglect to return them, than is felt on account of other borrowed articles—for example, *money*—is a mystery.

**A Genuine "Turner"**

Turner the painter was a ready wit. Once, at a dinner, where several artists, amateurs, and literary men were convened, a poet, by way of being very facetious, proposed as a toast the health of the *painters and glaziers* of Great Britain. The toast was drunk, and Turner, after returning thanks for it, proposed the health of the British *paperstainers*.

**"Not a Seat to be Had"**

Dr. Johnson treated Mrs. Siddons, who called upon him in Bolt Court, with the most marked politeness. Frank, his servant, could not immediately bring her a chair.

"You see, madam," said the doctor, "wherever you go, there isn't a seat to be had."

**More Practical than Patriotic**

A clergyman was descanting to the boys in a day school on the necessity of growing up good and useful citizens. In order to give emphasis to his remarks by appealing to their patriotic feelings, he pointed to a large flag hung up on the wall of the school, and exclaimed, "Boys, what is that for?"

A little urchin who understood the condition of the room better than the speaker's rhetoric, shouted out, "To hide the dirt, sir!"

**Disraeli's Sense of "Fitness"**

Since Lord Rosslyn's death we have seen no allusion to the well-known manner in which he received his appointment as Lord High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland. His services to his party, and his undoubted abilities, made it impossible to pass him over. "What can we do with Rosslyn?" said Dizzy. "Make him Master of the Buckhounds, as his father was," suggested one of his colleagues. "No," said the Premier, "he swears far too much for that; we will make him High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland!" And an excellent commissioner he made. [17]

### What the Scotch Cannot Help

When Boswell was introduced to Johnson in Mr. Davies' back parlor, recollecting the strong prejudice of the great man towards the Scotch, he begged his host not to tell where he came from. This at once put it into Davies' head to introduce him as "from Scotland."

Boswell, fearful of the effect this might have, exclaimed, "Mr. Johnson, I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it."

He received the crushing answer: "That, sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." [26]

### Double Meanings

A young man from the country lately volunteered his services to escort a young lady home from a party. On his way he cudgelled his brains for some interesting topic of conversation to amuse her with, but in vain; he could hit upon nothing until they met several cows, when the swain said, with much simplicity of manner, "Now, isn't it strange, what a motherly appearance a cow has?" To which the lady replied, "I do not think it strange, sir, that a cow should have a motherly appearance—to a calf." The beau was silent during the rest of the walk.

---

A gentleman, who went to take a lodging, asked the maid-servant, a remarkably handsome girl, whether she was to be let with the lodging. She answered, "No, she was to be let alone."

---

Dr. A—, physician at Newcastle, being summoned to a vestry in order to reprimand the sexton for drunkenness, he dwelt so long on the sexton's misconduct, as to raise his indignation so far as to draw from him this expression: "Sir, I was in hopes you would have treated my failings with more gentleness, or that you would have been the last man alive to appear against me, as *I have covered so many blunders of yours.*"

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

Pope, who was small and deformed, sneering at the ignorance of a young man, asked if he knew what an interrogation was. "Yes, sir," said he, "'tis a little crooked thing that asks questions."

---

A fellow set out a sign pretending to cure agues, which he spelled egoes. Some one said to Swift, "How does that fellow profess to cure agues?" He replied, "I don't know, but I am sure it is not by *spell*."

---

Dunning, the celebrated barrister, was addicted to the low and unpardonable vice of turning witnesses into ridicule at their examinations. One morning he was telling Mr. Solicitor-General Lee that he had bought a few *good manors* in Devonshire, near his native village of Ashburton.

"I wish," said Lee, "you would bring some of them into Westminster Hall; for, upon my honor, you have most need of them there."

---

Campbell Forster was once addressing a jury, and was much annoyed by Digby Seymour's carrying on a conversation the while. Presently he lost patience, and in his best brogue said, "Pray, Mr. Saymore, be quiet." "My name is not Saymore, but Seymour," corrected Digby; whereupon Forster angrily rejoined, "Then, sir, see more and say less."

---

A young lady at school, engaged in the study of grammar, was asked if "kiss" was a common or proper noun. After some hesitation she replied, "It is both common and proper, according to circumstances."

---

A poor man being laughed at for wearing a short cloak, said, "It will be long enough before I have done with it."

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

One day when a celebrated barrister was on his way to Westminster Hall with his large bag full of briefs, he was impudently accosted by a boy, who asked him if he was a dealer in old clothes.

"No," replied the barrister, "these are all new suits."

---

"Doctor," said a friend, stopping him in the street, "what do you take for a heavy cold?"

"A fee," replied the doctor, softly, and passed on.

---

A canon of Windsor enjoying a stroll,

One day when the evening was fine,

Met one of his vicars, a right jolly soul,

Now rather elated with wine.

"Ah, sir," said the latter, a little dismayed,

"To see me you wonder, no doubt;

I've stayed over long with my friend, I'm afraid,

Indeed, we've been spinning it out."

"From your manner of walking, your tale I don't doubt,

Though 'tis wrong in these follies to roam;

I see," he replied, "you've been spinning it out,

And now you are reeling it home."

---

A deacon once formed his Sunday-school into line, and marched them along the aisles—himself in front—singing: "Hold the Fort." The consternation which seized all parties at the second stanza—

"See the mighty host advancing,  
Satan leading on—"

can be better imagined than described. Deacon B— has objected to new methods ever since.

---

At a dinner-party not long since, an eminent Bishop was heard to read the following letter from his house-

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued*

keeper, with a perfectly unmoved countenance : " My lord, the emu has laid an egg ; in your lordship's absence, I have put it under the biggest goose."

---

A sponger was reproached one day for dining so often among his friends.

" What would you have me do ? " answered he ; " I am pressed to do it."

" True," answered Monk Lewis, " there is nothing more pressing than hunger."

---

" Your horse has a tremendous long bit," said a friend to Theodore Hook.

" Yes," said he ; " it is a *bit* too long."

---

" My friends," said a builder, whose health had been drunk at a dinner in celebration of the completion of a public hall which he had constructed—" My friends, I would gladly express my feelings did I not feel that I am better fitted for the scaffold than for public speaking."

---

" Did you present your account to the defendant ? " inquired a lawyer of a client.

" I did, your honor."

" And what did he say ? "

" He told me to go to the devil."

" And what did you do then ? "

" Why then—I came to you."

---

" I cannot imagine," said Lord Aberdeen, " why the war-party in France are always putting out their tongues at us." " It is very easily explained," replied Lord Brougham ; " it is because they want to lick us."

---

The celebrated Dr. South, the witty chaplain of King Charles II, one day called on his old friend and

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

fellow-collegian, Dr. Waterford, who pressed him to stay to dinner. Mrs. W—, however, thought her arrangements disturbed, and refused to make any addition to the leg of mutton already provided, saying, “She would not be put out of her way—that she would not”; the husband, provoked beyond all patience, declared that, if it were not for the stranger in the house, he would thrash her. Dr. South, who heard all this through a thin partition, hallooed out, “Dear doctor! as we have been friends so long, I beseech you not to make a stranger of me on this occasion.” [11]

---

He was a great bore, and was talking to a crowd about the local coming election. He said, “Jones is a good man; he is capable, honest, fearless and conscientious. He will make the very kind of officer we need. He once saved my life from drowning.”

“Do you really want to see Jones elected?” said a solemn-faced old man.

“I do, indeed. I’d do anything to see him elected,” said the bore.

“Then never let anybody know he saved your life,” counselled the solemn-faced man.

---

Lord Bridport, when he commanded the Channel Fleet, was called the “whiting catcher,” from his being so often in port. At a dinner given by the Mayor of Plymouth, he said :

“Captain Trowbridge, I suppose you have no objection to fill a bumper to the health of our commander-in-chief?”

“Not any,” replied the captain; “but hand me the claret, for I am quite tired of drinking him *in port*.”

---

“A schoolmaster inquired of one of his pupils on a cold day in winter what was the Latin word for ‘cold.’”

“I can’t remember it at the moment,” said the boy, “but I have it at my fingers’ ends.”

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

"What if I were one of those husbands, my dear, who get up cross in the morning and bang things about, and kick like everything, just because the coffee is cold?"

"John," responded his wife, "I would make it hot for you."

As her words admitted of more than one interpretation, John said nothing more about the coffee.

---

An editor, in reply to a young writer who wished to know which magazine would give him the highest position quickest, advised "A powder magazine, especially if you contribute a fiery article."

---

A new story was called "The Editor's Purse." We have seen it. There is nothing in it.

---

*Lecturer's Wife*: "Well, John, back from your lecture trip at last? Did you carry your audiences with you?"

*Lecturer*: "No; but I could have done so. They were small enough."

---

The Duke of Wellington, in a debate in the House of Commons, stated that two Irish clergymen had been murdered. A noble lord exclaimed :

"No, no; one!"

Whereupon the Duke rejoined : "If I am mistaken, I am sorry for it."

---

A printer observing two bailiffs pursuing an ingenuous but distressed author, remarked, "that it was a new edition of 'The Pursuits of Literature,' unbound, but hot-pressed."

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

In the newspaper account of an inquest held on the body of a glutton, who died by devouring part of a goose, the verdict *suffocation* was misprinted *stuffocation*.

---

On one occasion a large and well-known firm in St. Paul's churchyard sent a set of circulars to be printed, announcing a sale of goods in their various departments at an early date. One of the circulars ran thus : " On Monday, the 25th inst., we shall offer, at wonderfully low prices, the *remains* of a city merchant." The printer's reader, when he sent out the proof, put this query in the margin : " Hadn't you better bury them ?" [20]

---

Dr. Byles was once arrested, and subsequently tried, convicted and sentenced to confinement on board a guardship. This sentence was changed to confinement in his own house. A guard was placed over him. After a time the sentinel was removed, afterwards replaced, and again removed, when the doctor exclaimed that he had been *guarded, regarded and disregarded*. [11]

---

After a consultation a lawyer and his client emerged from the office of the former. " Do you always lock your office when you go out ?" asked the client.

" Yes, of course," answered the lawyer; " I don't want any rascal to get into my office before I return."

---

At an election for the town of Bedford, Mr. Whitbread and Howard, the philanthropist, were opposed by Sir William Wake and a Mr. Sparrow. A clergyman of the Established Church, a warm supporter of the patriotic candidates, one Sunday morning during the heat of the election, took for his text that passage from St. Matthew's Gospel, in which the question is proposed by our Lord to his disciples : " Are not two

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued.*

*sparrows* sold for a farthing?" Whence this encouragement to their perseverance and their fate is deduced: "Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many *sparrows*." [11]

---

The late Sir Robert Peel was strongly impressed with Hook's conversational powers and the genuine readiness of his wit; in illustration of this, he used to relate, among others, the following anecdote. One morning, at Drayton Manor, where Hook was staying as a guest, some one after breakfast happened to read out from the newspaper a paragraph, in which a well-known coroner was charged with having had a corpse unnecessarily disinterred. The ladies were very severe in condemnation of such unfeeling conduct; a gallant captain, however, who was present, took up the cudgels in behalf of the accused, maintaining that he was a very kind-hearted man, and incapable of doing anything without strong reasons, calculated to annoy the friends of the deceased. The contest waxed warm.

"Come," said Captain —, at length turning to Hook, who was poring over the *Times* in a corner of the room, and who had taken no part in the discussion, "you know W—; what do you think of him? Is he not a good-tempered, good-natured fellow?"

"Indeed he is," replied Hook, laying aside his paper; "I should say he was the very man to *give a body a lift*." [28]

---

Daniel Purcell, who was a non-juror, was telling a friend that when King George the First landed at Greenwich, he had a full view of him.

"Then," said his friend, "you know him by sight." "Yes," replied Daniel, "I think I know him, *but I can't swear to him*."

---

Douglas Jerrold never learned to talk with common patience of the translator's office; and he regarded the adaptor as somebody who managed to

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued*

cozen a reputation for originality from the foreigner. Discussing one day with Mr. Planché this vexed question, this gentleman insisted upon claiming some of his characters as strictly original creations.

"Do you remember my baroness in *Ask no Questions?*" said Mr. Planché.

"Yes. Indeed, I don't think I ever saw a piece of yours without being struck by your barrenness," was the retort.

This closed the discussion with a hearty laugh. [25]

---

A celebrated punster was once asked to make an extemporaneous pun. "Upon what subject?" inquired the punster. "Upon the King," said one of the company. "Oh," said the wit, "the *King is no subject.*"

---

A friend—let us say Barlow—was describing to my father the story of his courtship and marriage—how his wife had been brought up in a convent, and was on the point of taking the veil when his presence burst upon her enraptured sight. My father listened to the end of the story, and by way of comment said, "Ah! she evidently thought Barlow better than nun." [25]

---

We have heard of a minister who, when the anthem had concluded, rose and commenced reading Acts xx: "And after the uproar was ceased." That is a story on the side of the pulpit. We are favored with the following on the side of the choir. The minister finished his discourse and sat down, and the choir rose and sang, "It is time to awake from sleep."

---

In the reign of George II, the See of York falling vacant, and his Majesty being at a loss for a fit person to appoint to the exalted office, asked the opinion of the Rev. Dr. Mountain, who had raised himself, by his remarkably facetious temper, from being the son

DOUBLE MEANINGS—*continued*

of a beggar to the See of Durham. The doctor wittily replied, “Hadst thou faith as a grain of mustard-seed, thou wouldest say to this Mountain” (at the same time laying his hand on his breast), “‘Be removed, and be cast into the *sea* (see).’” The king laughed heartily, and forthwith conferred the preferment on the facetious doctor. [11]

---

A parish minister once took occasion, in the pulpit, to describe the devotional and solemn effect of the organ in public worship, and to solicit a contribution from the congregation to procure one. On coming out of church a gentleman observed to a friend, “I will give nothing towards the organ. I mean to present the table of commandments.”

“I advise you,” replied the friend, “*to keep the commandments*, and give something else to the church.”

---

The Bishop of Oxford having sent round to the churchwardens in his diocese a circular of inquiries, among which was, “Does your officiating clergyman preach the gospel, and is his conversation and carriage consistent therewith?” the churchwarden of Wallingford replied: “He preaches the gospel, but does not keep a carriage.” [11]

## An Appropriate Description

Theodore Hook said to some man with whom a bibliopolist dined the other day, and got extremely drunk, “Why, you appear to me to have emptied your *wine*-cellar into your *book*-seller.” [33]

## A Greater Reform than “The Reformation”

Judge Burnet, son of the famous Bishop of Salisbury, when young is said to have been of a wild and dissipated turn. Being one day found by his father in a very serious humor, “What is the matter with you, Tom?” says the Bishop; “what are you ruminating on?”

"A greater work than your lordship's "History of the Reformation," answered the son.

"Ay! what is that?" asked the father.

"The reformation of myself, my lord," replied the son.

### Gladstone as a Boy—or, "Coming Round to Willie's Opinion"

John Gladstone, the father of the late ex-premier of Great Britain, trained his children to give a reason for every opinion they offered. It was in this way that William E. Gladstone was early trained to debate.

On one occasion, William and his sister Mary disputed as to where a certain picture ought to be hung. An old Scotch servant came in with a ladder, and stood irresolute while the argument progressed, but as Miss Mary would not yield, William gallantly ceased from speech, though unconvinced of course. The servant then hung up the picture where the young lady ordered, but when he had done this he crossed the room and hammered a nail into the opposite wall. He was asked why he did this.

"Aweel, miss, that will do to hang the picture on when ye'll have come round to Master Willie's opeenion."

The family generally did come round to Willie's opinion, for the resources of his tongue-fencing were wonderful, and his father, who admired a clever feint as much as a straight thrust, never failed to encourage him by saying, "Hear, hear! Well said! Well put, Willie!" if the young debater bore himself well in the encounter.

### "Never Forget the Dear Ones"

Never forget the dear ones,

Buy always of the cheap;

If you've a numerous family

Which you're obliged to keep.

No, don't forget the dear ones,

When you a-shopping go;

Or you will soon discover

Your purse is getting low. [i]

### "Blindness" Explained

This is another anecdote told of the late Rev. Robert Hall. When discussing one day the necessity of church reform, with a clergyman, who, after being educated by the Dissenters, obtained a conviction of the purity of the established Church, and a lucrative living within her pale at the same time, Mr. Hall illustrated this kind of logical process in a way unsurpassed in the history of sarcasm. This gentleman's constant refuge, when hard driven by the arguments of Mr. Hall, was, "I can't see it,"—"I don't see it,"—"I can't see that at all." At last Mr. Hall took a letter from his pocket, and wrote on the back of it with his pencil in small letters the word "God." "Do you see that?"—"Yes." He then covered it with a piece of gold. "Do you see it now?"—"No."—"I must wish you good morning, sir," said Hall; and left him to his meditations. [11]

### A Heavy Charge

An able and learned judge is said to have been once obliged to deliver the following charge to a jury:—"Gentlemen of the jury; in this case the counsel on both sides are unintelligible; the witnesses are incredible; and both the plaintiff and defendant are such bad characters, that to me it is indifferent which way you give your verdict."

### "Composition and Decomposition"

One of Bishop Bloomfield's best *bons mots* was uttered during his last illness.

He inquired what had been the subject of his two archdeacons' charges, and was told that one was "On the Art of Making Sermons," and the other "On Churchyards." "Oh, I see," said the Bishop—"Composition and decomposition."

### Taking it Coolly

A man having published another as a liar, a scoundrel, and a *poltroon*, the latter complains that he does not spell poltroon correctly.

### "Seeing Double"

When *Black-eyed Susan* was in rehearsal at the Surrey Theatre, an important person—in his own estimation—strutted upon the stage, and, speaking of Elliston, the bacchanalian manager, exclaimed in an angry voice—

"How is this? I can see a duke or a prime minister any time in the morning, but I can never see Mr. Elliston."

"There's one comfort," Douglas Jerrold replied, "if Elliston is invisible in the morning, he'll do the handsome thing any afternoon by seeing you twice, for at that time of day he invariably sees double." [25]

### Woman's Position in the Scale of Beauty

In the year 1880, happening to be in Birmingham during the period covered by the General Election of that year, I called on a jeweller in New Street, to show him some beautiful engravings. While in the act, Dr. —, a leading Tory, drove up and entered.

The jeweller said to me, "Here comes Dr. —; I will introduce you to him, and he will be pleased to see your engravings." Accordingly he did so, saying: "You are fond of beautiful things, doctor; just look here."

"Oh, yes, Mr. D—," said the doctor (who was a bachelor), looking at Mrs. D—, who was present. "Yes, I'm fond of everything beautiful, from a lady upwards."

"Pardon me, doctor," said I, advancing; "I am sure you meant to say, 'From a lady downwards.'"

"You are quite right," said the doctor, laughing heartily; "of course I meant to say *that*. And now, will you kindly exchange cards with me?" This was done, and we shook hands and parted. [20]

### Obliging the Judges

A barrister was met by a friend the other day in the street, laden with a lot of law books. Pointing at the books, his friend said, "Why, I thought you carried all that stuff in your head!" "I do," quickly replied

the lawyer, with a knowing wink ; “*these are for the judges.*”

### Catching Himself Out

A good story is told of an ostler, who was sent to the stable to bring forth a traveler’s horse. Not knowing which of the two strange horses in the stall belonged to the traveler, and wishing to avoid the appearance of ignorance in his business, he saddled both animals and brought them to the door.

The traveler pointed out his own horse, saying, “That’s my nag.”

“Certainly, your honor, I know that very well ; but I didn’t know which was the other gentleman’s.”

### Truth and Patience

Douglas Jerrold’s *mot* about truth, was that “In this world truth can wait ; she’s used to it.”

### Why the Drunkard Couldn’t Get In

The exquisite confusion of Douglas Jerrold’s tipsy gentleman, who, after scraping the door for an hour with his latch-key, leans back and exclaims : “By Jove ! some scoundrel has stolen—stolen—the key-hole !” comes as near farce as any of his illustrations.

### Accommodating His Auditor

On one saying to another, “You speak foolishly,” the latter answered, “It is that you may understand me.”

### Puritan Wit

While the Bill against Occasional Conformity was still under discussion, the following characteristic incident occurred. As John Howe (some time chaplain to Oliver Cromwell) was one day walking in St. James’ Park, a noble lord, to whom he was well known, sent his footman to say that he desired to speak with him. He then entered into conversation about the obnoxious “Bill,” which he assured Howe “he had opposed to the utmost.” Gradually getting warm upon the subject, he so far forgot his company as to say, “Damn those wretches ! for they are mad,

and will bring us all into confusion." Howe calmly replied, "My lord, 'tis a great satisfaction to us, who in all affairs of this nature, desire to look upwards, that there is a God who governs the world, to whom we can leave the issues and events of things; and we are satisfied, and may therefore be easy, that He will not fail in due time of making a suitable retribution to all according to their present carriage. And this great Ruler of the world, my lord, has among other things also declared, He will make a difference between him that sweareth, and him that *feareth an oath.*" His lordship was struck with Howe's reply, and after a pause said, "Sir, I thank you for your freedom; I understand your meaning. I shall endeavor to make a good use of it." Howe adroitly answered, "My lord, I have a great deal more reason to thank your lordship, for saving me the most difficult part of a discourse, which is *the application.*" [18]

---

On another occasion, when dining in company with persons of great respectability, a gentleman at table thought proper to expatiate at great length on the merits of Charles I. Howe, observing that he frequently indulged in the most fearful oaths, quietly remarked, "That in his enumeration of the excellences of the Prince he had undertaken to panegyrize, he had totally omitted *one*, which had been universally ascribed to him." The gentleman was delighted to find Mr. Howe a witness in favor of the Prince he so much praised, and was quite impatient to know what was the excellence which had escaped him. Howe suffered him to press for the information some time, and then told him that "Charles was never known to swear an oath in his common conversation." It is pleasing to add, that the gentleman bore the reproof well, and promised to abandon the habit for the future. [18]

---

At another time, as he was walking along the street, he came up to two persons of rank, who were engaged

in a very angry dispute with one another. As he passed them he heard them "damn" each other in a most awful manner. On this, Howe taking off his hat and bowing to them with great courtesy, said, "I pray God *save* you both." They were so struck with this salutation, that they forgot their anger and joined in thanking him. [18]

### **Putting on the "Finishing Touch"**

Returning to London once, Douglas Jerrold was recognized in the railway carriage by a gentlemen who wished—seeing the enthusiasm with which Jerrold pointed to the beauties of the landscape—to ingratiate himself by the assumption of an equal enthusiasm. But the counterfeit was plain and revolting.

"I take a book," said the stranger, "retire into some unfrequented field, lie down, gaze on God's heaven, then study. If there are animals in the field so much the better; the cow approaches, and looks down at me and I look up at her."

"With a filial smile?" asked the stranger's annoyed listener. [25]

### **She Left Nothing Behind**

"Is all my luggage in the van?"

"Yes, madam."

"Have I left nothing behind?"

"No, madam; not even a copper."

### **Slow and Sure**

Sydney Smith himself tells a good story in illustration of the deficiency of a sense of fun. He had been treating the company at dinner to one of his best things, and observed all the table, as usual, in a roar, except one phlegmatic gentleman, who showed no symptom of a smile. Some time after the ladies had retired from dessert, this gentleman broke out into a tremendous laugh, and said: "Oh, I see, Mr. Smith, you meant that"—referring to his remark during dinner—"for a joke, didn't you?" "Well, sir, I rather think I did." It had just penetrated the inappreciative strata of his brain. [3]

### Amusing Tithe Story

A Quaker barber being sued by the clergyman of the village for tithes went to him and asked why he troubled him, as he never had any dealing with him in his whole life.

"Why," said the parson, "it is for tithes."

"For tithes!" replied the Quaker, "upon what account?"

"Why, for preaching in the church."

"Oh, then," replied the Quaker, "I have nothing to pay thee; for I come not there."

"Oh, but you *might*," objected the clergyman, "for the doors are always open at convenient times."

The Quaker immediately entered his action against the reverend for forty shillings. The parson inquired for what he owed the money.

"Truly, friend," replied the Quaker, "for trimming."

"For trimming! why I was never trimmed by you in my life."

"Oh," was the reply, "but thou *mightst have come* and been trimmed, if thou hadst pleased, for my doors are always open at convenient times as well as thine." [II]

### Wordsworth's Prettiest Production

Hartley Coleridge once being asked which of Wordsworth's productions he considered the prettiest, promptly replied, "His daughter Dora."

### Lawyer and Clients Known at a Glance

Lord Richardson, riding abroad in his coach to take air, and passing by a carman whose horses were of unequal fatness, called out, "Sirrah, sirrah, resolve me one question: Why is your foremost horse so lusty and pampered, and the rest such lean jades?"

The carman, not knowing the judge, but deeming him a lawyer, from his habit, answered, "Why, the reason is plain enough; my fore horse is the counselor, and all the rest his clients."

**The First Person Singular**

A supper of sheep's heads was proposed, and presently served. One gentleman present was particularly enthusiastic on the excellence of the dish, and as he threw down his knife and fork, exclaimed, "Well, sheep's heads for ever! say I."

Douglas Jerrold, who was present, at once remarked: "There's egoism." [25]

**Fishing for a Compliment, and—Getting It**

A young man having preached for his bishop, was anxious to get a word of applause for his labor of love. The bishop, however, did not introduce the subject, and his younger brother was obliged to bait the hook for him.

"I hope, sir, I did not weary your people by the length of my sermon to-day?"

"No, sir, not at all; nor by the depth either!"

**Once Quite Enough**

"Did you ever," said one preacher to another, "stand at the door after your sermon, and listen to what people said about it as they passed out?"

Replied he: "I did once—" a pause and a sigh—"but I'll never do it again."

**Cutting His Comb**

The proud Duke of Somerset employed Seymour the painter, to make some portraits of his running horses.

One day, at dinner, he drank to him with a sneer: "Cousin Seymour, your health."

The painter replied: "I really do believe that I have the honor to be of your grace's family."

The Duke, offended, rose from the table, and sent his steward to pay Seymour and dismiss him.

Another painter of horses was sent for, who, finding himself unworthy to finish Seymour's work, honestly told the Duke so. On this the haughty peer condescended once more to summon his cousin.

Seymour answered his mandate in these words: "My lord, I shall now prove that I am of your grace's family, for I will not come."

**An Important Pre-Nuptial Question**

Sheridan took his son one day to task upon his celibacy, and strongly urged that he should take a wife.

"Very well, father," answered Tom; "whose wife shall I take?"

**A Sexton in Trouble**

A visitor strolled into a fashionable church just before the service began. The sexton followed him up and tapping him on the shoulder, and pointing to a small cur that had followed him into the sacred edifice, said, "Dogs are not admitted."

"That's not my dog," said the visitor.

"But he follows you."

"Well, so do you."

The sexton growled, and removed the dog with unnecessary violence.

**One Way of Recognizing a Gentleman**

*Hospitable Host*: "Does any gentleman say pudden?"

*Precise Guest*: "No, sir. No gentleman says 'pudden.'"

**A Curious Account**

Douglas Jerrold's veterinary surgeon at Putney—a great character—was a favorite subject with him. His bill, especially, was preserved as a most laughable curiosity, one of the items being put thus (referring to a sick horse):

"His nose was warm, his ears was  
cold, and everything gave signs } £0 5s. od."  
of approaching desolation. [25]

**An Organ-Grinder's Earnings**

"What do you make a week?" said a magistrate to an Italian organ-grinder who charged a man with breaking his instrument the other day.

"Vour pound, sare."

"Eh, what? Four pounds for grinding an organ?"

"No, sare; not for grind—vor shut up and go away!"

### Playful Thoughts on Marriage

**A REASON AGAINST MARRIAGE.**—A celebrated wit was asked why he did not marry a young lady to whom he was much attached. “I know of no reason,” replied he, “except the great regard we have for each other.”

**MARRIAGE DEFINED.**—The gate through which the happy lover leaves his enchanted regions and returns to earth. “Did you ever,” says Sydney Smith, “hear my definition of marriage? It is that it resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them.” [2]—A clergyman, while engaged in catechizing a number of boys, asked one of them for a definition of matrimony. The reply was, “A place of punishment, where some folks suffer for a long time before they can go to Heaven.”

**A POSER.**—A Roman prelate once asked an old woman how many sacraments there were?—to which she observed that there were but two. “But,” said the bishop, “there is marriage; what prevents you regarding so holy, delightful and happy a state as one of the sacraments?” “Ah! sir,” replied the old woman, “if it is so very good, what is the reason you have never partaken of it?”

### Wrecked on the Coral Reefs

In one of Douglas Jerrold’s plays, an old sailor trying to snatch a kiss from a pretty girl—as old sailors will—received a box on the ear. “There,” exclaimed Blue-jacket, “like my luck; always wrecked on the coral reefs.” The manager, when the play was read in the green-room, could not see the fun, and the author struck it out. [25]

### A Convincing Rejoinder

A celebrated man not long since received a just rebuke. A lecturer stated that the aforesaid knew how to make a most excellent cup of coffee. A coun-

try parson wrote to him asking for the recipe. His request was granted, but at the bottom of the letter was the following manifestation of stupendous conceit :—"I hope that this is a genuine request, and not a surreptitious mode of securing my autograph."

To this the parson replied : "Accept my thanks for the recipe for making coffee. I wrote in good faith, and, in order to convince you of that fact, allow me to return what it is obvious you infinitely prize, but which is of no value to me—your autograph."

### Lengthening His Days

The witty Sheridan was once taken ill in consequence of a fortnight's continued dining out and dissipation. He sent for a celebrated doctor, who prescribed rigid abstinence, and calling again soon afterwards asked his patient if he was attending to that advice.

The answer being in the affirmative, "Right," said the doctor; "'tis the only way to secure you length of days."

"I do not doubt it," said Sheridan, "for these last three days since I began have been the longest to me in my life."

### Learning the Truth about Himself

Dr. Digby, going round to the mews, finds his new coachman's children playing about, and introduces himself :—"Well, my little man, and do you know who I am?"

"Yes," said the boy; "you're the man as rides in father's carriage."

### A New "Line" for Publishers

An old lady went into a Brighton bookstore the other day with an order which was rather difficult to fill. She said to the clerk at the counter: "Do you keep Bibles?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, I want a small pocket-Bible in very large print."

**Kemble and the Crying Child**

The following story is related in Tom Moore's "Diary" about John Kemble. He was performing one of his favorite parts, at some country theatre, and was interrupted from time to time by the crying of a child in the gallery, until at length, angered by this rival performance, Kemble walked with solemn steps to the front of the stage, and addressing the audience in his most tragic tones, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play is stopped, the child cannot possibly go on."

**Perpetual Wits—Perpetual Thieves**

A friend of Dr. Johnson, in conversation with him, was lamenting the disagreeable situation in which those persons stood who were eminent for their witticisms, as they were perpetually expected to be saying good things—that it was a heavy tax on them.

"It is indeed," said Johnson, "a very heavy tax on them—a tax which no man can pay who does not steal."

**Doctor and Patient, and Vice Versa**

A French doctor had just been operating upon Douglas Jerrold. The patient had winced a little, and the operator had said, "Tut! tut! It's nothing—nothing at all!"

Presently some hot water was brought in. The doctor put his fingers in it, and sharply withdrew them, with an oath. The patient, who was now lying, faint, upon the sofa, said: "Tut! tut! It's nothing—nothing at all!" [25]

**A Sense of Unworthiness**

A gardener's boy having gone to sleep under the shade of some fruit trees—"Wretched fellow," cried his master, as he awoke him, "are you not ashamed to sleep instead of working? Go along with you, you vagabond; you are not worthy that the sun should shine on you."

"That is why I went into the shade," replied the boy.

### A New Trinity

A gentleman who had been led by curiosity to visit the Positivist Church in London, where the doctrine of *Humanity* was preached to a select few, being asked what he had found there, replied, "Three persons and no God."

### Something to Show His Friends

An editor received a letter from a vain and tiresome contributor, asking for an opinion on the work he had recently sent in.

"I want your opinion," said the contributor, "written in your own hand, so that I can show it to my friends, and socially, I think it will greatly help me. I see that you sometimes write poetry, and it would please me much better if you would write it out in rhyme. You may make it funny if you want to."

The editor sent him the following :

" Try to be pleasant, and your writings are flat,  
Try to be funny, and they are worse than that ;  
Try to be wise, and you're simply a fool ;  
Try to be honest, and you're only a tool ;  
And it seems that there's no use in trying it more,  
For you only succeed, sir, in being a bore."

### How the Widow Deceived Her Husband's Relatives and—Herself

A somewhat amusing incident is told of a woman whose husband, a wealthy man, died suddenly without making a will. The widow, desirous of securing the whole of the property, concealed her husband's death, and persuaded a poor shoemaker to take his place while a will could be made. Accordingly he was closely muffled in bed, as if very sick, and a lawyer was called in to write the will. The shoemaker, in a feeble voice, bequeathed half of the property to the widow.

"What shall be done with the remainder?" asked the lawyer.

"The remainder," replied he, "I give and bequeath to the poor little shoemaker across the street, who has always been a good neighbor and a deserving man," —thus securing a rich bequest to himself.

The widow was thunderstruck with the man's audacious cunning, but did not dare to expose the fraud; and so the two rogues shared the estate.

### **Willing to Wait**

A gentleman who introduced his brother to Dr. Johnson, was earnest to recommend him to the doctor's notice, which he did by saying, "When we have sat together some time, you'll find my brother grow very entertaining."

"Sir," said Johnson, "I can wait."

### **Less and Less**

A chimney-sweep's boy went into a baker's shop for a twopenny loaf, and conceiving it to be diminutive in size, remarked to the baker that he did not believe it was weight.

"Never mind that," said the man of dough; "you will have the less to carry."

"True," replied the lad, and throwing three-half-pence on the counter, left the shop.

The baker called after him that he had not left money enough.

"Never mind that," said young sooty; "you will have the less to count."

### **The Limit of Debate**

Dr. Johnson having argued for some time with a very pertinacious gentleman, his opponent, who had talked in a very puzzling manner, happened to say, "I don't understand you, sir"; upon which Johnson observed, "Sir, I have found you an argument, but I am not obliged to find you an understanding."

### **A Fool's Knowledge and Ignorance**

John was thought to be very stupid. He was sent to a mill one day, and the miller said, "John, some people say you are a fool! Now, tell me what you do know, and what you don't know."

"Well, replied John, "I know millers' hogs are fat!"

"Yes, that's well, John! Now, what don't you know?"

"I don't know *whose corn* fats 'em!"

### An Improved Accidental

[SCENE: A chapel where the hymns used to be given out (and sung) line by line.]

*Minister* (the pulpit candles not having been lighted); *lq.*: "My eyes are dim, I cannot see."

*Congregation* (singing): "My eyes are dim, I cannot see."

*Minister*: "I speak of mine infirmity."

*Congregation* (singing): "I speak of mine infirmity."

*Minister*: "I ONLY SAID, 'MY EYES ARE DIM!'"

*Congregation* (singing): "I only said, 'My eyes are dim.'"

*Minister*: "I DID NOT MEAN TO SING A HYMN!"

*Congregation* (singing): "I did not mean to sing a hymn."

### A New Rhyme to an Old Line

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

*Punch*, who decides that neither shall have fee. [1]

### Every Little Helps

A friend drops in, and walks across the smoking-room to Douglas Jerrold's chair. The friend wants to enlist Mr. Jerrold's sympathies in behalf of a mutual acquaintance who is in want of a round sum of money. But this mutual friend has already sent his hat about among his literary brethren on more than one occasion. Mr. \_\_\_\_'s was becoming an institution, and friends were grieved at the indelicacy of the proceeding. On the occasion to which I now refer, the bearer of the hat was received by Jerrold with evident dissatisfaction. "Well," said Douglas Jerrold, "how much does — want this time?" "Why, just a four and two noughts will, I think, put him straight;" the bearer of the hat replied. *Jerrold*: "Well, put me down for one of the noughts." [25]

**Notice of Non-responsibility for a Wife**

Julia, my wife, has grown quite rude ;  
 She has left me in a lonesome mood ;  
 She has left my board,  
 She has took my bed,  
 She has gave away my meat and bread ;  
 She has left me in spite of friends and Church,  
 She has carried with her all my shirts.  
 Now you who read this paper,  
 Since she cut this reckless caper,  
 I will not pay one single fraction  
 For any debts of her contraction."

**A Consistent Preacher**

An amusing commentary on his text was afforded one Sunday evening by the curate of a parish which lies between Barnsley and Sheffield, but which it would hardly be fair to indicate further. The reverend gentleman had been preaching from the words, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." Unfortunately, it was a very dark night ; and, on the way home, the curate fell into a hole by the wayside where the road was being repaired, and seriously injured his ankle. The accident made the authorities wake up, however, and, during the progress of the repairs, a fire has been kept up burning after that night, and given light to all benighted travelers at that particular part of the road ; and thus it came to pass that the words of the curate's text had a literal fulfilment, for certainly, whatever he may have done himself, those who followed him in the way he took that night have not had to walk in darkness. [36]

**A Little Previous**

The *Leeds Express* records that Mr. Herbert Gladstone was addressing a Woman's Suffrage meeting at Leeds one afternoon, and passed a compliment upon the eloquence possessed by the fair sex, and the pleasure it gave the masculine portion of creation to listen to them. And then a male voice issued from the background with, "Wait a bit, lad ; tha'rt noan wed yet !" [17]

### Proving His Words Rather Unexpectedly

A would-be wit once said, speaking of the fair sex :  
 "Ah, its woman's mission to make fools of men."  
 "And how vexed we are," said a bright-eyed feminine present, "to find that nature has so often forestalled us."

### An Equitable Exchange

Mrs. Jerrold perfectly understood her husband, and they were very cordial in their relations with each other, though he often made her the butt for his jokes. He once told her that he thought a man might be allowed to treat his wife like a bank-note after she had turned forty, and change her into two twenties ! [16]

### Royal Art Critics

Mr. Cooper, R. A., was once down at Osborne, painting some cattle before the Queen and her Consort. The artist had been defending the presence of some dock-leaves in the foreground of his composition :—

"Well," said the Prince, jocosely, "they are beautifully painted, and doubtless assist the composition, but they do not give evidence of good farming." Her Majesty smiled appreciatively, and, shaking her finger at the Prince said : "How about the little pool of water in which the heifer's hind-legs are standing?" "Oh," said his royal highness, laughing, "I think it is a beautiful artistic idea, and gives a stamp of nature to the scene." "Yes, Albert," said the Queen, "and I like its introduction much, but it is not evidence of good draining." Upon this they both laughed heartily. [16]

### An Explicit and Exact Witness

If one is asked to be literal, he can scarcely be too conscientiously so, especially in a court of law.

"Now, you must give explicit and exact answers. You said you drove a milk-cart, didn't you?"

"No, sir, I didn't."

"Don't you drive a milk-cart?"

"No, sir."

"Ah, then, what do you do, sir?"

"I drive a hoss."

### Hope's Triumph Over Experience

Lord Eldon dining with the late Duke of York, commander-in-chief, there was a large party of military men at table. Amongst other distinguished guests was Greenwood, the great army agent, of whom the Duke himself, as well as half the army, perhaps, had borrowed money in their time. After the wine had been going round the table, a young officer rose and begged his royal highness's permission to propose a toast. This request being graciously granted, the proposer went on to say, much to the amusement of his interested brother officers especially, "Then, your royal highness, I beg to give the health of a gentleman now present—a *gentleman* to whom we are all much indebted—to whom we are likely long to owe much—and whom, indeed, *we can never hope to repay!*" The toast was drunk amidst rapturous applause, in which the good-humored prince most cordially joined.

### A Double-Barrelled Answer

"Did you, or did you *not* speak of me, sir, the other night?" said a peremptory gentleman to a fellow-collegian, afterwards an eminent statesman.

"I *did* or *did not* speak of you," was the prompt answer.

### Pitt's Effort of Memory

Mr. Pitt, speaking in the House of Commons, in the early part of his career, of the glorious war which preceded the disastrous one, in which we lost the colonies, called it "the last war." Several members cried out: "The last but one!" He took no notice; and, soon after, repeating the mistake, was interrupted by a general cry of "The last war but one! The last war but one!" "I mean, sir," said Pitt, turning to the Speaker, and raising his sonorous voice, "I mean, sir, the last war that Britons would wish to remember." The cry of interruption was instantly changed into universal cheering long and loud.

### Exceptions from "The Fall"

The late Bishop of Chichester states that at the annual examination of the Charity Schools around the city of Chichester, he was seated in the front row of the school-room, together with his daughters, and the family of the noble house of Richmond, when the Bishop kindly took part in the examination, and put several questions. To one boy he said, "We have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Now, does that passage mean that *every one* of us has sinned?"

The boy hesitated; but, upon a repetition of the question,, replied, "Every one except your lordship, and the company sitting on the front form."

### A Bishop Surprised

The same Bishop, at one of his confirmations, saw a school-girl inclined to be inattentive and troublesome ; he therefore held up his finger as a warning. These children being accustomed to *signs* from their teachers, of which they were expected to declare the meaning, did not suppose that the elevation of the Bishop's finger was an exception to their general rule of reply to such tokens ; they therefore all rose together, and from the middle of the church exclaimed in an exulting tone, "*perpendicular!*"—to the astonishment and consternation of the better inclined, and to the amusement, we fear, of not a few of the congregation.

### A Proof that Adam and Eve were English

When Eve brought woe to all mankind,

Old Adam called her *woe*-man;

But when she woo'd with love so kind,

He then pronounced it *woo*-man.

But now with folly and with pride,

Their husband's pockets brimming,

The ladies are so full of *whims*,

That people call them *whim*-men.

### A Rejected Lover's Rebuke

The following lines were sent by Dr. Watts to a lady to whom he wished to pay his addresses, upon her saying that she would have no such ill-shaped fellow as he was :

'Tis true my shape is somewhat odd,  
 But blaming me is blaming God ;  
 For, had I spoke myself to birth,  
 I'd please the prettiest lass on earth ;  
 And, could I form myself anew,  
 I would not fail of pleasing you.  
 Your charms have long been dear to fame,  
 And half the country boasts your name ;  
 But who that dimpling chin supplied,  
 And lent your cheeks their rosy pride,  
 With hair of jet your temples graced,  
 And with a slender shape your waist ?  
 Thyself, had'st thou thus beauteous made,  
 To *thee* the praise were duly paid ;  
 But since the Power that fashioned thee,  
 With the same hand created me,  
 Who might have touched my frame like **thine**,  
 And left thee one deformed as mine,—  
 For what thou art, that Power adore,  
 And sneer at my odd shape no more !  
 Those eyes that dart destructive rays,  
 E'en let them sparkle to His praise ;  
 Thy breast, the seat of love and snow,  
 Teach it His praise to pant and glow !  
 Then heaven inspire thy yielding voice  
 To one that's better worth thy choice,  
 And if the rest my suit disdain,  
 The thought shall never give me pain ;  
 But, that I tempt no greater curse,  
 Heaven I'll adore I'm made no worse.

### A Highwayman who Failed in Business

Tom Sheridan was his father's own son. While at Cambridge, he was pronounced to be the cleverest fellow in the place—as in point of wit and fun he very probably was. His father once said to him, “Tom, you have genius enough to get a dinner every day in the week at the first tables in London—and that's something; but that's all; you can go no further.”

They thoroughly understood each other. The son was equally complimentary to the father, as many oft-repeated anecdotes can testify. On one occasion

Tom complained over the bottle to him that his pockets were empty.

"Try the highway!" was his father's answer.

"I have," said Tom, "but I made a bad hit; I stopped a caravan full of passengers, who assured me they had not a farthing, for they belonged to Drury Lane Theatre, and could not get a penny of their salary."

(Tom's father was lessee of the theatre at the time.)

### Temptation to Suicide

Dr. Parr and Lord Erskine are said to have been the vainest men of their times. At a dinner on one occasion, Dr. Parr, in ecstacies with the conversational powers of Lord Erskine, called out to him, though his junior, "My lord, I mean to write your epitaph!"

"Dr. Parr," replied the noble lawyer, "your promise is a temptation to commit suicide!"

### Rebuking a Preacher, and—Repenting

In the later days of his life the Rev. Rowland Hill used to come to his chapel in a carriage. He got an anonymous letter rebuking him for this, because it was not the way his Heavenly Master traveled. He read the letter from the pulpit, and said it was quite true, and that if the writer would come to the vestry with a saddle and bridle he would ride him home.

### A "Bull" in a Pulpit

"Remember, I beseech you," said a preacher, "that we are all sailing down the stream of time, and must inevitably *land*, at last, *in the great ocean* of eternity."

### Forced by His Own Wit to Compound

As Quin and Foote one day walked out

To view the country round,

In merry mood they chatting stood,

Hard by the village pound.

Foote from his poke a shilling took,

And said, "I'll bet a penny,

In a short space, within this place,

I'll make this piece a guinea."

Upon the ground, within the pound,  
 The shilling soon was thrown ;  
 "Behold," said Foote, "the thing's made out,  
 For there is one pound one."  
 "I wonder not," says Quin, "that thought  
 Should in your head be found,  
 Since that's the way your debts you pay—  
 One shilling in the pound."

### An Effective Peroration

Sheridan was one day much annoyed by a fellow-member of the House of Commons, who kept crying out every few minutes, "Hear hear!" During the debate he took occasion to describe a political contemporary that wished to play rogue, but had only sense enough to act fool. "Where," exclaimed he, with great emphasis, "where shall we find a more foolish knave or a more knavish fool than he!" "Hear! hear!" was shouted by the troublesome member. Sheridan turned round, and, thanking him for the prompt information, sat down amid a general roar of laughter.

### David and Parnell—A Contrast

During a debate of the Hardwicke Debating Society in the Temple, while the retirement of Mr. Parnell was still undecided by the Irish Party, a speaker was contrasting Mr. Parnell's offence with that of David—by way of answering the question why David did not retire from public life. After pointing out the obvious differences between the two men, the repentance of David, etc., he ended up thus: "And then, sir, there is this last and most important difference of all: David wrote *a psalm*, and Mr. Parnell *a manifesto!*" [16]

### The Only Reason Against Parnell's Retirement

Among the many epigrams and witticisms on the Irish crisis which are flying about, one of the neatest was originated at the Hardwicke Debating Society by a speaker, who contended that Mr. Parnell should retain his leadership. "For why," said this speaker,

"should we ask Mr. Parnell to retire into private life, when he has proved so conclusively that it is just in the sphere of private relations that this powerful politician does not know how to conduct himself?" [16]

### Not "Home Rule," but "Home Ruin"

"A group of working men were discussing Parnell in my hearing," writes Mr. Howard Paul; "said one, 'I looked on Parnell as the champion of Home Rule, but this O'Shea business suggests that he is even better at Home Ruin.'" [16]

### 'Opeless Helocation

It would appear from the following that at Kidderminster it is common, if not a local peculiarity, to use the letter H very unceremoniously—either by denying it its proper functions, or by setting it to work in most uncongenial company :

#### *The Letter H Petitions the Inhabitants of Kidderminster:*

Whereas by you I have been driven  
 From 'ouse, from 'ome, from 'ope, from 'eaven,  
 And placed by your most learn'd society,  
 In hexile, hanguish, and hanxiety;  
 And charged, without one just pretence,  
 With harrogance and himpudence:  
 I here demand full restitution,  
 And beg you'll mend your *elocution*

#### *Answer of the Inhabitants of Kidderminster:*

Whereas we've rescued you, ingrate,  
 From 'anger, 'avoc, and from 'ate,  
 From 'orse-pond, 'anging, and from 'alter,  
 And consecrated you in *haltar*;  
 And placed you where you'd never be,  
 In *honor* and in *honesty*;  
 We think your talking an intrusion,  
 And shall not mend our *elocution*.

*Kidderminster, Jan. 25, 1837.*

### Quake Wooing

"Martha, does thee love me?" asked a Quaker youth, of one at whose shrine his heart's fondest feelings had been offered up.

"Why, Seth," answered she, "we are commanded to love one another, are we not?"

"Ay, Martha; but does thee regard me with that feeling that the world calls love?"

"I hardly know what to tell thee, Seth; I have greatly feared that my heart was an erring one. I have tried to bestow my love on all; but I may have sometimes thought, perhaps, that thee was getting rather more than thy share."

### Surnames

Men once were surnamed for their shape or estate.

(You all may from history worm it.)

There was Louis the Bulky, and Henry the Great,  
John Lackland, and Peter the Hermit;

But now, when the door-plates of misters and dames  
Are read, each so constantly varies,  
From the owner's trade, figure, and calling, **surnames**  
Seem given by the rule of contraries.

Mr. Wise is a dunce, Mr. King is a Whig,

Mr. Coffin's uncommonly sprightly,

And huge Mr. Little broke down in his gig  
While driving fat Mrs. Golightly.

At Bath, where the feeble go more than the stout,  
(A conduct well worthy of Nero)

Over poor Mr. Lightfoot, confined with the gout,  
Mr. Heavyside danced a bolero.

Miss Joy, wretched maid, when she chose Mr. Love

Found nothing but sorrow await her;

She now holds in wedlock, as true as a dove,  
That fondest of mates, Mr. Hayter.

Mr. Oldcastle dwells in a modern-built hut,  
Miss Sage is of mad-caps the archest;

Of all the queer bachelors Cupid e'er cut,  
Old Mr. Younghusband's the starchest.

Mr. Child, in a passion, knocked down Mr. Rock,  
 Mr. Stone like an aspen-leaf shivers ;  
 Miss Pool used to dance, but she stands like a stock  
 Ever since she became Mrs. Rivers.  
 Mr. Swift hobbles onward, no mortal knows how,  
 He moves as though cords had entwined him ;  
 Mr. Metcalf ran off upon meeting a cow,  
 With pale Mr. Turnbull behind him.

Mr. Barker's as mute as a fish in the sea,  
 Mr. Miles never moves on a journey ;  
 Mr. Gotobed sits up till half after three,  
 Mr. Makepeace was bred an attorney.  
 Mr. Gardener can't tell a flower from a root,  
 Mr. Wild with timidity draws back ;  
 Mr. Ryder performs all his journeys on foot,  
 Mr. Foot all his journeys on horseback.  
 Mr. Penny, whose father was rolling in wealth,  
 Consumed all the fortune his dad won ;  
 Large Mr. Le Fever's the picture of health ;  
 Mr. Goodenough is but a bad one ;  
 Mr. Cruikshank stepped into three thousand a year  
 By showing his leg to an heiress.  
 Now I hope you'll acknowledge I've made it quite clear,  
 Surnames ever go by contraries. [37]

### A Clever Coachman

The late Lord Mansfield told the following anecdote about himself from the bench : He had turned off his coachman for certain acts of peculation, not uncommon in this class of persons. The fellow begged his lordship to give him a character.

"What kind of a character can I give you?" said his lordship.

"Oh, my lord, any character your lordship chooses to give me, I shall most thankfully receive."

His lordship accordingly sat down and wrote as follows :

"The bearer, JOHN —, has served me three years in the capacity of coachman. He is an able driver, and a very sober man. I discharged him because he cheated me.—(Signed) MANSFIELD."

John thanked his lordship, and walked off. A few mornings afterwards, when his lordship was going through his lobby to step into his coach for Westminster Hall, a man, in a very handsome livery, made him a low bow. To his surprise he recognized his late coachman.

"Why, John," said his lordship, "you seem to have got an excellent place; how could you manage this with the character I gave you?"

"Oh, my lord," said John, "it was an exceedingly good character, and I am come to return you thanks for it. My new master, on reading it, said he observed your lordship recommended me as an able driver and a sober man. 'These,' said he, 'are just the qualities I want in a coachman; I observe,' his lordship adds, 'that he discharged you because you cheated him. Hark you, sirrah,' said he, 'I'm a Yorkshireman, and I'll defy you to cheat me!'"

### Curious Coincidences

'Tis curious to find in this overgrown town,

While through its long streets we are dodging,  
That many a man is in trade settled down,

Whose name don't agree with his lodging!!!  
For instance, Jack Munday in Friday Street dwells,

Mr. Pitt in Fox Court is residing;  
Mr. White in Black's Buildings greengrocery sells,  
While East in West Square is abiding.

Mr. Lamb in Red Lion Street perks up his head,

To Lamb's Conduit Street Lion goes courting;  
Mr. Boxer at Battle Bridge hires a bed,

While Moon is in Sun Street disporting;  
Bill Brown up to Green Street to live now has gone,  
In Stanhope Mews Dennett keeps horses—  
Dr. Low lives in High Street, Saint Mary-le-bone,  
In Brown Street one Johnny White's door sees.

*But still much more curious it is, when the streets*

*Accord with the names of the tenants;*  
*And yet with such curious accordance one meets*  
*In taking a town-tour like Pennant's.*

*For instance, in Crown Street, George King you may note,*

To Booth in May Fair you go shopping ;  
And Porter of Brewer Street rows in a boat  
To Waters of River Street, Wapping.

Mr. Sparrow in Bird Street has feathered his nest,

Mr. Archer in Bow Street woos Sally ;

Mr. Windham in Air Street gets zephyr'd to rest,

Mr. Dancer resides in Ball Alley.

Mr. Fisher in Finsbury fix'd all his views,

Mr. Foote in Shoe Lane works at carding ;

Mr. Hawke has a residence close to the Mews,

And Winter puts up in Spring Garden.

In Orange Street Lemon vends porter and ale,

In Hart Street Jack Deer keeps a stable ;

In Hill Street located you'll find Mr. Dale,

In Blue Anchor Row Mr. Cable.

In Knight-Rider Street you've both Walker and Day,

In Castle Street, Champion and Spearman ;

In Blackman Street Lillywhite make a display,

In Cheapside lives sweet Mrs. Dearman.

In Paradise row Mr. Adam sells figs,

Eve, in Apple-tree Yard rooms has taken ;

Mr. Coltnan in Foley Street fits you with wigs,

In Hog Lane you call upon Bacon.

Old Homer, in Greek Street, sells barrels and staves,

While Pope in Cross Lane is a baker ;

In Liquorpond Street Mr. Drinkwater shaves,

In Cow Lane lives A. Veal, undertaker !

My jumbles and jingles I've now written down,

And if for their meaning you tease me—

That they really have none I must candidly own,

And silence will therefore best please me.

If not witty, nor curious, they'll answer, I ween,

To get me "ask'd out" by great ninnies—

And out of the firm of some new magazine

Procure me a couple of guineas. [37]

### Prevention—in This Case—The Next Best Thing to Cure

A young man was found tricking at cards, and the players pitched him out at a first floor window. Being picked up by a friend, he blustered a good deal and said: "What would you advise me to do under the circumstances?"

"Not play cards again except on the ground floor," replied the candid friend.

### A Cautious Referee

When John Reeve was playing *Bombastes* at Bristol, upon being stabbed by *Artixommous* he denied the fairness of the thrust, and appealing to the pit, said, "It is not fair, is it?" A bald-headed gentleman, who, probably, took the whole representation to be serious, and to whom Reeve directed his glance, replied, "Really, sir, I cannot say, for I don't fence."

### Calvinists and Tigers

"And, pray, Mr. S——," said one of his fellow-collegians to a leader of a religious sect in one of our universities, "pray, let me inquire what is it that you call yourself?"

"I, sir, I? Why, sir, I call myself a *moderate Calvinist*."

"Then, sir, let me tell you," replied the querist, "that you might just as well call yourself a *tame tiger*."

### When an Antagonist is Agreeable

We are never so well pleased with an antagonist, as when he makes an objection to which we are provided with a good answer.

### Top and Bottom

The following playful colloquy in verse took place at a dinner table between Sir George Rose and James Smith, in allusion to Craven Street, Strand, where he resided:

*James Smith :*

"At the top of my street, the attorneys abound,  
And down at the bottom the barges are found :  
Fly, honesty, fly, to some safer retreat,  
For there's craft in the river, and craft in the  
street."

*Sir G. Rose :*

"Why should honesty fly to some safer retreat,  
From attorneys and barges, 'od rot 'em ?  
For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,  
And the barges are *just* at the bottom."

### A Day After "The Fair"

Collins, the poet, was never a lover, and never married. His odes, with all their exquisite fancy and splendid imagery, have not much interest in their subjects, and no pathos derived from feeling or passion. He is reported to have been once in love, and as the lady was a day older than himself, he used to say jestingly, that he "came into the world a day after the fair."

### My Wife's Diary

Know, *Punch*, I am a married man ! Yesterday I found a little note-book in the passage. It turned out, on inspection, to be my wife's ; and to contain,—what think you?—a journal, which that woman has been keeping, I daresay, ever since our marriage. The ensuing is an extract therefrom. *Punch*, you are a gentleman ; and therefore, I hope you will insert it. If you were a lady, indeed, I imagine you hardly would ; besides, I should wish no lady to take a leaf out of my wife's book. Here, however, sir, is one at your service :

SUNDAY.—Charles out *late* last night ; not up this morning till *twelve* ; breakfast not over till *one*. Wished *particularly* to go to *church* ; my new lilac bonnet with pink trimmings came home yesterday. Couldn't *go*, of course. The Walkers and the Hutchinses there, and *all*! Very *angry* with Charles ; wouldn't *talk* to him at *dinner* ; went up afterwards

into the *dressing-room*, and there sat by *myself*. When I came down again, found him smoking and reading the paper. That Edwards called this evening. Knew Charles would ask him to stay to supper. Slipped out directly after *tea*; locked the *larder*, took the key of the *cellar*, and went to *bed*; hoped they were *comfortable*!

MONDAY.—Charles very *cross* this morning, about *last night*; but coaxed him over, and made him promise me that dear *shawl*. Paid for *week's house-keep*. *Mem.*—to get those open-work *stockings*.—Charles out at half-past ten. Mrs. Saunders called. How well she manages Saunders! *Mem.*—not to forget her hint about the *save in sugar*.—Charles home again for a wonder, at four; said he had been for a walk with Bradshaw. Steaks for dinner. Charles never asked me what *cut* I would like; *contradicted* me about the horse-radish, when I *knew* I was *right*; and would eat spring onions with his cream-cheese when I told him *not*.

TUESDAY.—Charles up in his little room, writing, all the day. Went out shopping with Susan and the baby. Ordered the *brown sugar* instead of the *lump*, and put by the difference for *sundries*. Got the dear shawl. Met the Wellses, and heard that Mr. Charles was seen yesterday at the *Pantheon*; what did he want *there* I should like to know. (*Mem.*—to *find out*.)—After dinner (shoulder of mutton), Charles reading. Baby cried. Charles wanted it sent upstairs; how *very unreasonable*! the poor dear was teething—wouldn't *hear* of such a thing. Charles went out in a *tiff*, and never came home again till *two* in the *morning*. Said he had been kept up talking over *business*. Business, indeed! His eyes were so *red*, and he smelt so *dreadfully* of cigars! The cold shoulder of mutton for *you, sir, to-morrow*!

WEDNESDAY.—My lord wanted *soda-water* this morning. In his tantrums at breakfast, because there were no *bloater*s—went out directly after. Asked him if he was going to the *Pantheon*?—took no notice.

Oh, I am afraid he's very sly! Ordered the *cold shoulder* and *no* rice-pudding, to-day; bought the stockings. Home came Charles to dinner with a friend; *so vexed* about the bill of fare. Serves him right!

THURSDAY.—Charles away again early; told me not to wait for him. Nice lamb chops, *all alone*, at two. Charles back at half-past twelve; saw a *play-fell* hanging out of his pocket; and taxed him, when he admitted he had been to Drury Lane. Why couldn't he have taken *me*?

FRIDAY.—He wanted half-a-dozen pocket-handkerchiefs, and gave *me* the *money* to buy them. Got him *four*—quite enough for him. Bought a *nice cardinal*. Saw such a *love* of a work-box in a shop in Regent Street—five guineas! *Oh!* how my fingers itched for it. Charles this afternoon in a good humor; gave him a broad hint about the *work-box*. I shall get it.

SATURDAY.—Charles scolding this morning about his *wrist-bands*, which had no *buttons*. Sewed them on *myself*, and pacified him. Asked him if he would like to *dine out* to-day; said “*No*.” How *provoking!* for I wanted to spend the day at Mrs. Hopkin’s. Had a few words about the mutton, whether it should be *boiled* or *roast*; but thought it best to *give way*. Surprised him at dinner with *College dumplings*—my own making. Mixed him a nice glass of *brandy and water* afterwards. *Got the work-box!*

There, *Punch*, I am already your debtor for many a good joke; increase the obligation by one more—that of letting me show my wife the above in print. I am, etc., BENEDICTUS.

#### Contents of a Kitchen Table Drawer

Three aprons, two dusters, the face of a pig,  
A dirty jack-towel, a dish-clout, a wig;  
The foot of a stocking, three caps and a frill,  
A busk and six buttons, mouse-trap and quill;  
A comb, and a thimble, with Madonna bands,  
A box of specific for chaps on the hands;  
Some mace and some cloves tied up in a rag.

An empty thread paper, and blue in a bag ;  
 Some pieces of ribbon both greasy and black,  
 A grater and nutmeg, the key of the jack ;  
 An inch of wax candle, a steel and a flint,  
 A bundle of matches, a parcel of mint ;  
 A lump of old suet, a crimp for the paste,  
 A pair of red garters, a belt for the waist ;  
 A rusty bent skewer, a broken brass cock ;  
 Some onions and tinder both with the drawer lock ;  
 A bag for the pudding, a whet-stone and string,  
 A penny cross bun, and a new curtain ring ;  
 A print for the butter, a dirty chemise,  
 Two pieces of soap, and a large slice of cheese ;  
 Two teaspoons of lead, a large lump of rosin,  
 The feet of a hare, and corks by the dozen ;  
 A card to tell fortunes, a sponge and a can,  
 A pen without ink, and a small patty pan ;  
 A rolling pin pasted, a common prayer-book,  
 Were the things which I found in the drawer of a cook.

### Literary Curiosity

A literary Frenchman, being in company with the celebrated Dr. Wallis, was boasting of the superiority of the French language with regard to euphony, and challenged the doctor to produce anything in English to equal the following lines :

"Quand un cordier, cordant, veult corder une corde,  
 Pour sa corde corder, trois cordons il accorde ;  
 Mois si un des cordons de la corde descorde.  
 Le cordon descordant fait descordeur la corde."

The doctor, with promptitude, immediately translated the very words into English, only substituting for the French word *corde* the pure English word *twist*. The reader will find that the first four of the following lines exactly correspond with those of the Frenchman ; the next four were added by the doctor by way of completing the triumph. The remaining lines were not written till some time after. Dr. Johnson was so pleased with the above anecdote that he gave the whole twelve lines in his folio dictionary, to show into how many meanings and bearings the words twist and twister may be twisted :

"When a twister, a-twisting will twist him a twist,  
 For the twisting his twist he three twines doth  
 entwist ;

But if one of the twists of the twist he doth untwist,  
 The twine that untwisteth untwisteth the twist.

"Untwirling the twine that entwisteth between  
 He twirls with his twister the two in a twine ;  
 Then twice having twisted the twines of the twine  
 He twisteth the twine he had twined in twain.

"The twine that in twining before in the twine,  
 As twines were untwisted, he now doth untwine ;  
 Twixt the twain intertwisting a twine more between,  
 He, twirling his twister, makes twist of the twine."

### In Return for a Brace of Birds

(*An impromptu.*)

My thanks I'll no longer delay,

For birds which you shot with such skill ;  
 But though there was nothing to pay,  
 Yet each of them brought in his *bill*.

I mean not, my friend, to complain,  
 The matter was perfectly right,  
 But when *bills* such as these come again,  
 I'll always accept them at *sight*.

### Elegy by a Schoolboy

How blest was I at Dobson's ball,  
 The fiddlers come, my partner's chosen ;  
 My oranges were five in all,  
 Alas !—they were not half-a-dozen.

For soon a richer rival came,  
 And soon the bargain was concluded ;  
 My Peggy took him without shame,  
 And left me hopeless and deluded.

To leave me for one orange.  
 Could not your pockets full content ye ?  
 What could ye do with all that store ?  
 He had but six—and five were plenty !

And mine were biggest, I protest,  
 For some of his were only penny ones ;  
 While mine were *all* the very best,  
 And juicy, large—and sweet as any one's !

Could I have thought, ye beaux and belles,  
 An orange would have so undone me—  
 Or anything the grocer sells,  
 Could move my fair one thus to shun me ?

All night I sat in fix'd disdain,  
 While hornpipes numberless were hobbled ;  
 I watch'd my mistress and her swain,  
 And saw his paltry present gobbled.

But when the country dance was call'd,  
 I could have cried with pure vexation,  
 For by the arms I saw her haul'd,  
 And led triumphant to her station.

What other could I think to take ?  
 Of all the school she was the tallest ;  
 What choice worth making could I make,  
 None left me but the very smallest ?

But now, all thoughts of her adieu,  
 This is no time for such diversion,  
*Mair's Introduction* lies in view  
 And I must write my Latin version.

Yet all who that way are inclined,  
 This lesson learn from my undoing,  
 Unless your pockets are well-lined,  
 Tis labor lost to go a-wooing.

### Ludicrous Blunders

General knowledge is unquestionably necessary for the lawyer. Ludicrous mistakes have frequently occurred through the deficiencies of some in this respect. A story is told of a barrister examining a witness in a trial, the subject of which was a ship. Among other questions, he asked where the ship was at a particular time. "Oh !" replied the witness, "the ship was then in quarantine." "In Quarantine, was she? And pray, sir, where is Quarantine?"

Another instance given by Mr. Chitty, of the value of general knowledge to the lawyer, is worth citing. It is well-known that a judge was so entirely ignorant of insurance causes, that, after having been occupied for six hours in trying an action on a policy of insurance upon goods (Russia duck) from Russia, he, in his address to the jury, complained that no evidence had been given to show how Russia ducks (mistaking the *cloth* of that name for the *bird*) could be damaged by sea water and to what extent.

### "Abstract" and "Concrete"

"I believe you are right," said an old gentleman, "so far as the abstract is concerned; but—"

Just then he slipped and struck his head against the asphalt pavement.

"But," he continued, as he got up, "I don't care to discuss the matter in concrete."

### Poetry and Prose

John Foster, referring to a couple whom he had known, said that "their courtship was carried on in poetry. Alas! many an enamored pair have courted in poetry, and after marriage *lived in prose*." As Colton says, "Marriage is a feast where the grace is sometimes better than the dinner."

### A Good Representative

The late Sir Henry Smith, long M. P. for Colchester, was one of the Tories of the old school; and among the advocates of Reform, his resolute opposition to all change gave him a reputation for folly and obstinacy which was not borne out by his real character.

On one occasion he was canvassing in presence of numerous friends, and on asking a heavy-looking farmer for his vote, the man replied: "I'd vote for ye, Sir Henry, as usual, only you're such a fool."

"Fool, am I?" retorted Sir Henry; "then I'm the very man to represent you."

This diamond shaft of wit went to the farmer's heart, and with a loud guffaw he promised his vote.

**Political Ophthalmia and Its Cause**

"I wonder what makes my eyes so weak," said an ultra-Radical to Mr. Disraeli. "Why, they are in a weak place," said the latter.

**"Half and Half"**

Writing lines is the penance Harrow boys do for all their sins, in and out of school. If a boy is late for school, he writes lines; if he misses "bill," he writes lines. If the lines are not finished in a stated time, their number is doubled.

There was one clever boy who escaped writing half the ordered quantity; and the masters tell the story of how he did it to this day. He was an untidy boy, and was often taken to task for his carelessness and disorder. One day his master, who had very dignified and impressive manners, and who always said "we," instead of "you," when talking to the boys, found occasion to reprove him.

"We do not look very clean," he said with much severity. "We have not washed our hands this morning. Have we?"

"I don't know about yours," was the impudent boy's answer; "but I've washed mine."

"Ah!" said the master, "we are very impudent to-day. We will have to write a hundred lines before the next 'bill.'"

When "bill" time came, the master sent for the boy. "Have we written our lines?" he asked.

"I've written my fifty," the boy answered very promptly, handing in his paper; "but I don't know whether you've done your half!"

**The Plural of *Égal***

Gustav Masson, the late genial French Master of Harrow School, once told me that he asked one of his class one day the following question:

"What is the plural of *égal*?"

The boy addressed looked mischievously at his tutor—whose good nature every Harrow boy could depend on—and with eyes sparkling with merriment said:

"Two gals." [20]

### A Searching Question

The two celebrated divines and scholars, Drs. South and Sherlock, were once disputing on some religious subject, when the latter accused his opponent of using *his wit* in the controversy. "Well," said South, "suppose it had pleased God to give you wit, what would you have done?" [11]

### Gallant Wit

"Mr. Smith," said a beautiful young lady walking in the garden; "I fear I shall never bring this pea to perfection." "Then permit me," said Sydney Smith, taking her by the hand, "to lead perfection to the pea." [3]

### The Mud-fish

*By an indignant Tory Footman.*

"The mud-fish at the Crystal Palace escaped from his tank, and could not be found. The other day he was discovered in the marble canal, under a fountain, where he had been amusing himself by eating the gold fish and doubling his size."—*Daily Paper.*

In Sir Joseph's marble dishes  
Cuts about them golden fishes,  
All their life in splendor passes—  
Them's, you see, Us Hupper Classes.

From his tank, while folks is sleeping,  
Comes the nasty Mud-fish leaping,  
With no end of spite toward us—  
That's, you see, the Lower Horders.

Up and down our basin scouring,  
All his betters he's devoring,  
Gorging till he gets enormous—  
Just as would them low Reformers.

Moral struck me when I seed 'em :  
Don't give low folks too much freedom :—  
Gold-fish lives on this here basis :—  
*Keep the Mud-fish in their places.* [1]

### Putney Bridge in Olden Time

Hook's residence at Putney afforded occasion for the delivery of one of his best *bon mots*. A friend, viewing Putney bridge from the little terrace that overhung the Thames, observed that he had been informed that it was a very good investment, and, turning to his host, inquired "if such was the case—if the bridge really answered?"

"I don't know," said Theodore, "but you have only to cross it, and you are sure to be tolled." [28]

### Why He Wouldn't Buy Haydn's Music

As Haydn was amusing himself one morning in shopping, he inquired of the music-seller if he had any select and beautiful music.

"Certainly," replied the shopman, "I have just printed some sublime music of Haydn's."

"Oh," returned Haydn, "I'll have nothing to do with that."

"How, sir! you will have nothing to do with Haydn's music; and pray, what fault have you to find with it?"

"Oh, plenty; but it's useless talking about it since it does not suit me; show me some other."

The music-seller, who was a warm Haydnist, replied, "No, sir; I have music, it is true, but not for such as you;" and turned his back upon him.

As Haydn was going away, smiling, a gentleman of his acquaintance entered, and accosted him by name. The music-seller, still out of humor, turned round at the name, and said to the person who had just entered the shop, "Haydn! ay, here's a fellow who says he doesn't like that great man's music."

The Englishman laughed, an explanation took place, and the music-seller was for the future acquainted with the man who found fault with Haydn's music.

### Lord North's Drollery

A few only of Lord North's sayings have reached us, and these, as might be expected, are rather things of which he had chanced to coat over with some sar-

casm or epigram that tended to preserve them ; they consequently are far from giving an idea of his habitual pleasantry and the gaiety of thought which generally pervaded his speeches. Thus—when a vehement speaker on his own side disclaimed him, calling aloud for his head, turned round and perceived his victim unconsciously indulging in a soft slumber, and, becoming still more exasperated, denounced the Minister for being capable of sleeping while he ruined the country—the latter only complained how cruel it was to be denied the solace which other criminals generally enjoyed—that of having a night's rest before their fate.

---

When surprised in a like indulgence during the performance of a very inferior artist, who, however, showed equal indignation at so ill-timed a recreation, he contented himself by observing how hard it was that he should be grudged a very natural release from considerable suffering ; but, as if recollecting himself, added, that it was unjust in the gentleman to complain of him for taking *the remedy which he had himself been considerate enough to administer*.

---

The same good humor and drollery quitted him not when in opposition. On Mr. Martin's proposal to have a starling placed near the chair and taught to repeat the cry of "Infamous Coalition!" Lord North coolly suggested, that, as long as the worthy member was preserved to them, it would be a needless waste of public money, since the starling might well perform his office by deputy.

#### "Shaving" Them Both

A barber having come up to poll at the hustings at a Berwick election, one of the candidates, with evident marks of disappointment, asked, "What ! did you not shave me this morning ?"

"Yes," answered the barber, "but I have shaved Mr. — (meaning the opposing candidate) since."

### Maiden Speech in the House of Commons

A young but ambitious M. P. having long resolved upon attempting some speech which should astonish the House, at last rose solemnly, and, after three loud hemms, spoke as follows :

"Mr. Speaker: Have we laws, or have we not laws? If we have laws, and they are not observed, to what end were those laws made?"

So saying he sat down, his chest heaving high with conscious consequence : when another member rose, and delivered his thoughts in these words :

"Mr. Speaker: Did the honorable gentleman who spoke last, speak to the purpose, or not to the purpose? If he did not speak to the purpose, to what purpose did he speak?"

It is needless to describe the roar of laughter with which the House was instantly shaken, or to say that the orator never spoke again in that place.

### Quin and the Coxcomb

Quin one day complaining of his old age and infirmities, in the public rooms at Bath, a pert young coxcomb asked, "What would you give to be as young as I am?"

"I do not know," said Quin, measuring him very contemptuously, "but I should be almost content to be as foolish."

### Very Small for its Age

Foote, being at a nobleman's house, his lordship, as soon as dinner was over, ordered a bottle of Cape to be set on the table, which, after magnifying its good qualities, and in particular its age, he sent round the table in glasses that scarcely held a thimbleful.

"Fine wine, upon my soul," says the wit, tasting, and smacking his lips.

"Is it not very curious!" says his lordship.

"Perfectly so, indeed," says the other; "I do not remember to have seen anything so little of its age in my life before."

### Accounting for His Baldness

The late Duke of York once remarked to Colonel W—— at the mess of the 11th regiment, that the colonel was uncommonly bald, and, although a younger man than his royal highness, he stood in more need of a wig. The colonel who had been of very long standing in the service, and whose promotion had been by no means rapid, informed his royal highness that this could be very easily accounted for.

"In what manner?" asked his royal highness, rather eagerly.

"By junior officers stepping over my head," Colonel W—— replied.

The duke was so pleased with the reply, that the gallant colonel obtained promotion in a few days afterwards.

### Qualification for a Lawyer

A barrister observed to a learned brother in court, that he thought his whiskers were very unprofessional. "You are right," replied his friend, "a lawyer cannot be too barefaced."

### Poverty a Virtue

Dr. R—— maintained that poverty was a virtue.

"That," replied Canning, "is literally making a virtue of necessity."

### Qualification for Burial with Military Honors

*Military Examiner:* "What must a man be to be buried with military honors?"

*Recruit:* "Dead."

### What to do with Medicine

"Now, Willie," said a coaxing mother, "I don't like to take medicine any better than you do, but I just make up my mind to do it, and then I do it."

The child looked up through his tears and replied, "And mother, I just make up my mind that I won't, and I don't."

**How to get Rid of a Nuisance**

The Rev. Mather Byles had a slough opposite his house, in which, on a certain wet day, a chaise containing two of the town council stuck fast. Dr. Byles came to his door and saluted the officials with the remark :

" Gentlemen, I have often complained to you of this nuisance without any attention being paid to it, and I am very glad to see you *stirring in this matter now.*"

**Applying the Sermon**

A renowned clergyman once preached rather a long sermon from the text, " Thou are weighed in the balance and found wanting." After the congregation had waited about an hour, some began to get weary and went out ; others soon followed, greatly to the annoyance of the minister. Another person started, whereupon the parson stopped in his sermon and said : " That's right, gentlemen. As fast as you are weighed, pass out."

**A Chat on Blindness**

Dean Cowper, of Durham, who was very economical with his wine, descanting one day on the extraordinary performance of a man who was blind, he remarked that the poor fellow could see no more than " that bottle."

" I do not wonder at it all, sir," said a minor canon at the table, " for we have seen no more than that bottle all the afternoon."

**Glad that his Rent was to be Raised**

A landlord told his tenant that he meant to raise his rent. " I am glad of it, sir," said the tenant, " for I cannot raise it myself."

**A Distinction**

One day when Colman and his son were walking from Soho Square to the Haymarket, two witlings-- Miles Peter Andrews and William Augustus Miles--

were coming the contrary way, on the opposite side of the street. They had each sent to Colman a dramatic manuscript for the summer theatre, and being anxious to get the start of each other, in the production of their separate works, they both called out, "Remember, Colman, I am first oar." "Humph," muttered the manager, as they passed on, "they may talk about first oars, but they have not a skull between them."

This reminds one of a witticism of Douglas Jerrold's: Two conceited young authors were boasting that they rowed in the same boat with a celebrated wit of the day,—“Ay,” replied Jerrold, “but not with the same skulls.”

### Boaz and Ruth

A Sunday-school teacher was giving a lesson on Ruth. She wanted to bring out the kindness of Boaz in commanding the reapers to drop large handfuls of barley.

“Now, children,” she said, “Boaz did another very nice thing for Ruth; can you tell me what it was?”

“Married her!” yelled one of the boys.

### Why They were Out of Spirits

The elder Matthews one day arrived at a forlorn country inn, and addressing a lugubrious waiter, enquired if he could have a chicken and asparagus. The mysterious serving-man shook his head.

“Can I have a duck, then?”

“No, sir.”

“Have you any mutton chops?”

“Not one, sir.”

“Then, as you have no eatables, bring me something to drink. Have you any spirits?”

“Sir,” replied the man, with a profound sigh, “we are out of spirits.”

“Then, in wonder’s name, what have you got in the house?”

“An execution, sir,” answered the waiter.

### Unused Possessions

Pithy enough was the reply of the avaricious old man, who, being asked by a nobleman of doubtful courage what pleasure he found in amassing riches which he never used, answered : " Much the same that your lordship has in wearing a sword."

### Doing Credit to His Teacher

A lawyer and his clerk riding on the road, the clerk desired to know what was the chief point of the law. His master said if he would promise to pay for their suppers that night he would tell him, which he agreed to.

" Why, then," said the master, " good witnesses are the chief points in law."

When he came to the inn the master bespoke a couple of fowls for supper, and when they had supped, told the clerk to pay for them according to agreement.

" Oh, sir," said he, " where is your good witness?"

### An Unanswerable Argument against Bigamy

At one of the schools in Cornwall, the inspector asked the children if they could quote any text of Scripture which forbade a man having two wives. One of the children sagely quoted in reply the text, " No man can serve two masters."

### Preventing the Scapegrace from Sharing in the Will

" Now, Mr. Lawyer," said the dying man, " I want you to settle it in my will so that my son Joe won't get a shilling. He is a worthless fellow, and will spend his money in a week."

" Oh, that's all right," said the lawyer, politely, " I'll take care of that. I'll see that he doesn't get anything." And he didn't. *Neither did anybody else.*

### How to Eat Pine-Apple

The following story is told of a Conservative M. P., who, wishing to conciliate an old captain of a mine, a voter, sent him a splendid pine-apple from his hot-house.

"I hope you liked it," he said to the old man, when he met him a few days afterwards.

"Well, yes, thankee, pretty well. But I suppose we sort of people are not used to them fine things, and don't know how to eat 'em."

"How did you eat it, then?" asked the M. P.

"Well," said the old man, "we boiled 'im."

"Boiled it?" sighed the M. P. in horror, thinking of his pine-apple.

"Yes, we boiled 'im with a leg of mutton."

### Making the Most of the Situation

A man was asked by another, with whom he was not on the best of terms, where he had taken up his abode.

"Oh," he replied, "I am living by the canal at present. I should be delighted if you would drop in some evening."

### Making Free with a Judge's Character and Office

Some few years ago a culprit was tried in a mayor's court for an offence, and though he seemed undoubtedly guilty, his worship recommended the offender to the jury, on account of his good character. After some deliberation, the foreman got up and thus addressed the mayor: "May it please your worshipful, we find the prisoner guilty, but, in countenance of your worship's exceptional good character, we acquit him."

### A Little Girl's Idea of "Cash"

A little five-year old, after shopping with her mother at leading drapery shops, remarked, "Seems to me there are a good many boys named 'Cash.'"

### A Distinction and a Difference

"Were you never in a court of justice before?" asked a judge of a witness who was conducting himself in a very unseemly manner.

"No, never," replied the man; "but I've often been before the magistrates."

### Two Boys' "Tall" Talk

*Tom*: "My father's so tall he can look over the garden wall."

*Jack*: "So can my father, with his hat on."

### One Example in which a Translation is better than an Original

Dryden's translation of Virgil being commended by a right reverend bishop in the presence of a very witty earl—"The translation is, indeed, excellent," said his lordship, "but everything suffers by a translation—*except a bishop*."

### The Cost of a Wife according to Scripture

A Quaker married a woman of the Church of England. After the ceremony, the vicar asked for his fees, which, he said, were a crown. The Quaker, astonished at the demand, said if he would show him any text in the Scripture which proved his fees were a crown, he would give it unto him; upon which the vicar directly turned to Proverbs xii. verse 4, where it is said, "A virtuous woman is a *crown* to her husband."

"Thou art right," replied the Quaker, "in thy assertion; Solomon was a wise man. Here are the five twelvepenny pieces, and something beside to buy a pair of gloves."

### Johnson's Literary Irony

Mrs. B—— desired Dr. Johnson to give his opinion of a new work she had just written; adding, that if it would not do, she begged him to tell her, for she had other *irons in the fire*, and in case of its not being likely to succeed, she could bring out something else.

"Then," said the doctor, after having turned over a few of the leaves, "I advise you, madam, to put it where your *other irons* are."

### Lengthening His Name by an Ell

It being proved, on a trial at Guildhall, that a man's name was really *Inch*, who pretended that it was *Linch*

"I see," said the judge, "the old proverb is verified in this man, who being allowed an *Inch*, has taken an L."

### Prophecy Fulfilled

One coming into a cathedral, where the choir consisted of very bad voices, said, that the prophecy of Amos was fulfilled: "And the songs of the temple shall be howlings."

### Politely Said: but—Left Unsaid—Still More Polite

Stevens (who died grave-digger of Clerkenwell, in 1768, at the age of ninety) was once on an examination before one of the courts in Westminster Hall, relative to some parochial affairs, when, being asked who he was, he replied, "I am grave-digger of the parish of St. James, Clerkenwell, *at your honor's service.*"

### Giving a Good Account of His Stewardship

"I cannot conceive," said one English nobleman to another, "how it is that you manage. I am convinced you are not of a temper to spend more than your income, and yet though your estate is less than mine, I could not afford to live at the rate you do."

"My lord," said the other, "I have a place."

"A place! You amaze me. I never heard of it till now. Pray what place?"

"*I am my own steward.*"

### The Sweep Turning the Tables on the Parson

A dignified clergyman, going to his living to spend the summer, met near his house a comical old chimney-sweeper with whom he used to chat.

"So, John," said the doctor, "whence come you?"

"From your house, sir, where this morning I swept all your chimneys."

"How many are there?" said the doctor.

"No less than twenty," quoth John.

"Well, and how much a chimney have you?"

"Only a shilling a-piece, sir."

"Why, then," quoth the doctor, "you have earned a great deal of money in a little time."

"Yes, yes," says John, throwing his bag over his shoulder, "we *black coats* get our money easy enough."

### Probably Money-hunting

Mr. Hare, formerly the envoy to Poland, had apartments in the same house with Mr. Fox ; and, like his friend Charles, had frequent dealings with the moneyed Israelites. One morning, as he was looking out of his window, he observed several of the tribe assembled at the door, for admittance.

" Pray, gentlemen," says he, " are you Fox-hunting, or Hare-hunting this morning ? "

### " Shaving " the Barber

" Sir," said a barber to an attorney, who was passing his door, " will you tell me if this is a good seven-shilling piece ? " The lawyer pronounced the piece good, deposited it in his pocket adding, with great gravity, " if you'll send your lad to my office, I'll return the fourpence."

### Curious Epistle from One Quaker to Another

FRIEND AMMINADAB : I desire thou wilt go from me unto one of those sinful men in the flesh, called attorneys ; and, after duly communing with him, see that he taketh out an instrument with a seal fixed thereunto, by means whereof we may seize the outward tabernacle of Obadiah Prim, and bring him before the lambskin men at Westminster, and teach him to do as he would be done unto. And so, I rest thy friend in the light. TIMOTHY STEADY.

### The Ass was " Missing "

An eminent judge used to say that in his opinion the very best thing ever said by a witness to a counsel was the reply given to Missing, the barrister, at the time leader of his circuit. He was defending a prisoner charged with stealing a donkey. The prosecutor had left the animal tied up to a gate, and when he returned, it was gone. Missing was very severe in his examination of the witness.

" Do you mean to say the donkey was stolen from the gate ? "

"I mean to say, sir," giving the judge and jury a sly look, at the same time pointing to the counsel, "the ass was Missing."

### Two Examples of French Running

Some years ago at the Derby, when the grand prize was won by a French horse, the Frenchmen present cheered most vociferously, and in addition to other expressions of triumph, one of them shouted, "Waterloo avenged!"

"Yes," said Sir William Harcourt, who was standing by, and whose ready wit and crushing sarcasm have so often turned the tables on his opponents, "you *ran* well in both cases."

### "A Host in Himself" is Sometimes Expensive

A Dean of Canterbury, remarkable for holding a great number of church-preferments, traveling slowly in his chariot to that city, was overtaken by a poor parson, who had somehow procured the loan of a good horse. The parson, *en passant*, bowed most respectfully to the dean, who, desiring him to stop, begged he would call at the Mermaid at Rochester, and order him a dinner, to be ready at a certain hour. The parson accordingly called on the host, and told him that he would be honored with a visit at such a time, and must provide a good dinner.

"For how many, and please your honor?" says Boniface.

"Why," replied the parson, "I can't well say how many persons the whole company will consist of, for I only saw the Dean of Canterbury, the Canon of Winchester, the Provost of Lichfield, the Rector of Orpington, the Vicar of Romney, and one of the King's chaplains."

The parson then proceeded to his own home, which was within a few miles, and the landlord began to make ample provision for the numerous guests he expected to entertain. Accordingly, when the dean arrived, a large table was set, and the cloth laid.

"How's this!" cries his reverence, "you have

shown me the wrong room; this, surely is intended for a large company."

"And please your honor," replied the landlord. "Parson Singlechurch called about an hour and a half ago, and told me I must provide for your honor, and the Canon of Winchester, and the Provost of Lichfield, and the Rector of Orpington, and one of the King's chaplains, too, and I don't know how many more, and so I thought, and please your honor, I'd get enough."

"Oh, very well!" coolly answered the dean, who now recollect ed himself, "I ought to have asked Mr. Singlechurch to have stayed and dined with me."

### A Child's Idea of a "Sister of Charity"

"Who is that lady dressed in black, mamma?" asked Bobby, as he sat with his mother on a steamboat.

"That is a Sister of Charity, my boy," replied his mother.

Bobby pondered deeply for a moment, and then said, "What is she, mamma, Faith or Hope?"

### Why He Wore the Blue Ribbon

*Apostle* (to countryman): "I see you wear the blue ribbon, sir. You look upon rum as a curse, of course?"

*Countryman*: "There ain't no man in our township what can drink more than I can. I took that blue ribbon for the second biggest hog at the country fair."

*Apostle*: "You ought to have taken first prize, my friend."

### Were They Both Insane?

Lord Shaftesbury was fond of a good story, and he used to relate an amusing anecdote in illustration of the way in which eminent men sometimes formed their opinions as to the sanity of their patients. He was sitting one day as chairman of the Lunacy Commission, when the alleged insanity of a lady was under discussion, and he took a view of the case adverse to that of his colleagues.

One of the medical men who was there to give evidence crept up to his chair and said in a confi-

**dental** tone : "Are you aware, my lord, that she **sub-scribes** to the Society for the Conversion of the Jews?"

"Indeed," replied Lord Shaftesbury; "and are you aware that I am the president of that society?"

### "A Little Knowledge is a Dangerous Thing"

Another story he was fond of telling was that the editor of a "religious" paper in South America, who had attacked him with great bitterness for the active part he had taken in the anti-slavery agitation, and urged him to look at home, "and consider the condition of the working-classes of his own country." The editor followed up his reproaches with the question, "Who is this Lord Shaftesbury?" and then continued, "Some unknown lordling; one of your modern philanthropists, suddenly started up to take part in a passing agitation. It is a pity he does not look at home. Where was he when Lord Ashley (Lord Shaftesbury's title in early life) was so nobly fighting for the Factory Bill, and pleading the cause of the English slave? We never even heard the name of Lord Shaftesbury then."

### "All But!"

The curate of a London church, whose pronunciation is more pedantic than proper, has been very justly snubbed for alluding to the heir-apparent as though his name was written "Awlbuth" Edward. He was asked the other day why he so significantly excluded the Prince of Wales in his prayer for the Royal Family.

"Exclude him! What do you mean?"

"Why," said his friend, "you always pray for *all but* Edward, Prince of Wales!"

### A Child Proving His Ability to Use a Dinner Knife

Little Rudolph one day begged an invitation to dinner at the house of a little friend with whom he had been playing during the morning. At the table his hostess anxiously enquired: "Rudolph, can you **cut** your own meat?"

"Humph!" said Rudolph, who was sawing away,

"Can't I? I've cut up a great deal of tougher meat than this at home."

### **Consoling his Father**

"Yours is a very expensive school," said papa, with a long face and a short purse.

"Very sorry, Dad," replied young hopeful, but I don't learn more than I can help."

### **Advantages of Occasionally Reading the Bible**

Some gentlemen of a Bible Association calling upon an old woman to see if she had a Bible were severely reprimanded by the old lady's reply.

"Do you think, gentlemen, that I am a heathen, that you ask me that question?" Then, addressing a little girl, she said: "Run and fetch me the Bible out of the drawer that I may show it to the gentlemen."

The visitors declined giving her the trouble, but she insisted. Accordingly the Bible was brought, nicely covered, and on opening it, the old woman exclaimed: "Well, how glad I am you came; here are my spectacles that I have been looking for these three years."

### **It Takes Two to Play an Organ**

In a cathedral, one day after service, the bellows-blower said to the organist, "I think we have done very well to-day."

"We!" said the organist in no small surprise at the independence of his menial, "how can you pretend to have any merit in the performance? Never let me hear you say such a thing again."

The man said nothing more at the time, but when they were next playing, he suddenly intermitted in his task of inflating the organ. The organist rose in wrath to order him to proceed, when the fellow, thrusting his head out from behind the curtain, asked slyly, "Shall it be *we*, then?"

### **Faith and Riches**

They have sayings at Oxford which would be termed profane anywhere else. For instance, when a tradesman has grown rich by trusting the scholars, they say, that "his faith hath made him whole."

### Promotion and Pride

A farmer was elected to a corporalship in a militia company. His wife, after discoursing with him for some time on the advantage which the family would derive from his exaltation, enquired in a doubting tone :

" Husband, will it be proper for us to let our children play with our neighbors' now ? "

One of the little urchins eagerly asked : " Are we not all corporals ? "

" Tut ! " said the mother, " hold your tongue, there is no one corporal but your father and myself ! "

### A Cool Reception

A gentleman having appointed to meet his friend on particular business, went to his house and knocked at the door, which was opened by a servant girl. He informed her he wanted her master.

" He is gone out, sir," said she.

" Then your mistress will do," said the gentleman.

" She," said the girl, " is gone out, too."

" My business is of consequence," returned he ; " is your master's son at home ? "

" No, sir," replied the girl, " he is gone out."

" That's unlucky, indeed," replied he ; " but perhaps it may not be long before they return ; I will step in and sit by your fire."

" Oh, sir," said the girl, " the fire has gone out, too."

Upon this the gentleman good temperedly bade her inform her master that he did not expect to be received so coolly.

### Fools are Best Kept Apart

A proud parson and his man, riding over a common, saw a shepherd tending his flock in a new coat. The parson asked in a haughty tone, who gave him that coat.

" The same people," said the shepherd, " that clothe you—the parish."

The parson, nettled a little, rode on, murmuring a considerable way, and sent his man back to ask the

shepherd if he would come and live with him, for he wanted a fool. The man went to the shepherd, accordingly, and delivered his master's message, concluding that his master really wanted a fool.

"Are you going away, then?" said the shepherd.

"No," answered the other.

"Then you may tell your master," replied the shepherd, "his living won't maintain *three* of us."

### A Good Move

Sheridan being on a Parliamentary committee, one day entered the room as all the members were seated, and ready to commence business. Perceiving no empty seat, he bowed, and looking round the table with a droll expression of countenance, said, "Will any gentleman *move* that I may *take the chair*?"

### Letter from a Father in Sunderland, to His Son in Newcastle

SON: Thy mother hath taken an old coat of mine, to make thee one against this time. I have sent Peggy with the old mare; thou and she can ride back by turns. I am told thou makest little progress in thy learning, for which thou art an *ass*, and I am thy *Father*.—R. T.

### Quid Pro Quo

It is reported that one day, when Lord Brougham had driven to the House in the vehicle of his own invention, which Robinson, the coachmaker, had christened after him, he was met in the robing-room by the Duke of Wellington, who, after a low bow, accosted him thus :

"I have always hitherto lived under the impression that your lordship would go down to posterity as the great apostle of education, the emancipator of the negro, the restorer of abused charities, the reformer of the law. But no, you will hereafter be known only as the inventor of a carriage."

"And I, my lord duke, have always been under the delusion that your grace would be remembered as the

hero of a hundred battles, the liberator of Europe, the conqueror of Napoleon. But no, your grace will be known as the inventor of a pair of boots."

"Confound the boots!" said the Iron Duke, "I had quite forgotten them. You have the best of it."

### Hats Off!

Mr. Spurgeon on one occasion was much annoyed by three young men persisting in wearing their hats in the Tabernacle. He appeared for the time not to notice them, but proceeded to tell his audience of a visit he paid to a Jewish synagogue.

"When I entered," he said, "I took off my hat, but was informed that the great mark of respect was to keep it on. I did so, though I can assure you that I felt very strange wearing my hat in a place of worship. And now, as I paid this mark of respect to the synagogue, may I ask those three Jews in the gallery to conform equally to our rules and kindly uncover their heads."

The young men "collapsed."

### How Many Commandments Are There?

A country lad went to be confirmed by the bishop, who, inquiring if he had learned his catechism, asked him how many commandments there were.

"Forty," replied Hodge.

"Go home, child, and learn better," said the bishop.

On his return home, Hodge met a companion who was also going to be confirmed. "Stop," said he, "do you know how many commandments there be?"

"Yes, to be sure," replied the other; "ten."

"Pshaw! you fool!" said the other; "I told the bishop forty, and that would not do; go home and learn better."

### Wit Defined and Exemplified

In a private conversation, the late Earl of Chatham asked Dr. Henniker, among other questions, how he defined wit? The doctor replied, "My lord, *wit* is like what a *pension* would be given by your lordship to your humble servant—a *good thing well applied*."

### Finding Time for a Man who had None

"I can't go to gaol," said a funny vagrant. "I have no time."

"The court provides that," said the magistrate. "I give you ten days."

### Defining a False Witness

The children at a Sunday-school, not long since, being asked, among other questions, what bearing false witness against one's neighbor meant, a pert little girl replied : "It is when nobody hain't done nothing and somebody goes and tells."

### A Witty Remark on Posterity

An orator lately said to his audience, "I am speaking for the benefit of posterity," when some one shouted, "Yes; and if you don't get done soon they'll be here!"

### Why He Did not Get any Pudding

There was only one passenger on board a certain sailing vessel, who took his meals in the after-cabin with the captain and mate, and who always suspected that those two worthies defrauded him of his due share of the eatables when they got the chance. One day a roly-poly pudding appeared at dinner, just enough for three, and the passenger, who had a sweet tooth, was instantly on the alert to see that he got his fair and proper third.

"Mr. X—, do you like pudding ends, sir?" the captain asked, with the knife poised in air ready to cut the delicacy.

"No, I do not like the ends, sir," replied the passenger, who considered that he had as much right to the middle slice as anyone else.

"Ah, well, then, me and my mate does!" was the gallant captain's observation, as he cut the pudding in two, and deposited half on the mate's plate and half on his own.

**When Thirteen is an Unlucky Number**

Some people have an objection to thirteen at dinner. Dr. Kitchiner, a culinary, happened to be one of a company of that number at Dr. Henderson's, and, on its being remarked, and pronounced unlucky, he said, "I admit that it is unlucky in one case."

"What case is that?"

"When there is only dinner for twelve."

**When is a Saddle a Mule?**

Two Oxford scholars, meeting on the road with a Yorkshire hostler, fell to bantering him, and told the fellow they would prove him to be a horse or an ass.

"Well," said the hostler, "and I can prove your saddle to be a mule."

"A mule," cried one of them, "how can that be?"

"Because," said the hostler, "it is between a horse and an ass."

**A Doubtful Apology**

"Mr. —," said his honor, after a particularly daring statement on the part of the lawyer, "you must apologize for that remark, or I will commit you for contempt."

The counsel rose, and, after a pause, said, "I beg the court's pardon; I now see that your honor was right, and I was wrong, as your honor generally is."

**Coals or "Coke"**

A certain barrister, who was remarkable for coming into court with dirty hands, observed that he "had been turning over the leaves of Coke."

"I should have thought it was coals you had been turning over," observed a wag.

**A Consumptive Patient**

Dr. Thomson was called in to attend a gentleman who had persuaded himself that he was, to use a popular expression, "dying by inches." The doctor caught the invalid at dinner, and having seen him demolish some soup, a slice of salmon, two cuts of chine of mutton, and half a partridge, inquired what other symptoms of disease he felt.

"None particularly, sir," said the invalid, "only everything about me tends to convince me that I am consumptive."

"Your appetite is, at all events, sir," said the doctor, and walked off.

### "Coming Home to Roost"

James II, who so seldom said a good thing, one day said a very ill-bred one. He declared in the midst of his courtiers that "he had never known a modest man make his way at court." To this observation one of the gentlemen present boldly replied, "And please your majesty, whose fault is that?" The king was struck, and remained silent.

### A Methodical Organ-Blower

Some years ago a gentleman at Windsor took the place of the organist, with a view to show his superiority in execution. Among other pieces he was playing one of Dr. Blow's anthems; but, just as he had finished the verse part, and had begun the full chorus, the organ ceased. On this he called to Dick, the bellows blower, to know what was the matter.

"The matter?" says Dick; "I have played the anthem below."

"Ay," says the other, "but I have not played it above."

"No matter," quoth Dick, "you might have made more haste, then; I know how many puffs go to one of Dr. Blow's anthems as well as you do; I have not played the organ so many years for nothing."

### Political Fireworks

A Whig, of the same stamp with Tom Burnet, son of Bishop Burnet, being asked what he thought of the fireworks which celebrated the Peace of Utrecht (a peace concluded by the Tory ministry much against the wishes of the opposition), "I think," said he, "they were a burning shame."

**Too Tame to be Borne**

A hasty, passionate fellow was supping with a friend who never contradicted him, not wishing to provoke his wrath.

Unable to endure this acquiescence, he at last burst out, "Zounds! deny something, that I may know there are two of us."

**Perfection**

A celebrated preacher having remarked in a sermon that everything made by God was perfect, "What think you of me?" said a deformed man in a pew beneath, who arose from his seat, and pointed at his own back.

"Think of you?" reiterated the preacher; "why, that you are the most *perfect hunchback* my eyes ever beheld."

**Less Gallant, Perhaps, than Accurate**

In some parish churches it was once the custom to separate men from women. A clergyman, being interrupted by loud talking, stopped short, when a woman, eager for the honor of her sex, arose and said, "Your reverence, the noise is not among us."

"So much the better," answered the clergyman; "it will be the sooner over."

**A Commission Agent as a Purchaser**

*Auctioneer*: "But, I say, there is nobody else in the room offering a bid for the ancient cabinet. How is it you keep on bidding against yourself?"

*Broker*: "Well, you see, that is a matter of business. I have got a commission from two different parties to buy the cabinet at any cost, and I don't know yet which of them is to have it."

**"The Very Worst," Followed by a Still Worse**

A dull playwright, about to read one of his compositions in the green-room at Drury Lane, observed that he knew nothing so terrible as reading a piece before such a critical audience.

"I know one thing more terrible," said Mrs. Powell.

"What can that be?" asked the author.

"To be obliged to sit and hear it."

### Extinguishing a "Spark"

As Lady B—— L—— was presiding one evening at the tea-table, one of her ruffles caught the flame of the tea-lamp, and was burned before it could be extinguished.

Lord M——, who was of the party, and thought to be witty on the accident, remarked that he "did not think her ladyship so apt *to take fire*."

"Nor am I, my lord," replied she, with great readiness, "from *such sparks* as you."

### N. B.—P. S.

During a heavy shower a business man, carrying a very wet umbrella, entered an hotel to pay a call to some one upstairs. After placing his umbrella to drain, he wrote upon a piece of paper, and pinned it to the umbrella: "N. B.—This umbrella belongs to a man who strikes a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound blow. Back in five minutes."

He went upstairs, and after an absence of fifteen minutes returned, to find his umbrella gone, and in its place a note: "P. S.—Umbrella taken by a man who walks ten miles an hour. Won't be back at all."

### Shortening Time by Distance

Sydney Smith had a maid who used to boil eggs very well by her master's watch; but one day he could not lend it to her because it was under repair, so she took the time from the kitchen clock, and the eggs came up quite raw.

"Why didn't you take the three minutes from the clock, as you do from the watch, Mary?"

"Well, sir," replied Mary, "I thought that **would** be too much, as the hands are so much larger."

### A Good Shot

A little boy being asked what occupation his father pursued for a living, answered, with great simplicity, "He's a dreadful accident maker, sir, for the newspapers."

### Nathan and David

The Rev. Nathan D—, a worthy minister, had in his congregation a wealthy member named David, who he thought would be a suitable match for his daughter; but as David seemed rather dilatory in coming to the point, the minister thought he would give him a helping hand. Meeting David one day he casually remarked that his daughter was getting married soon. Of course David eagerly inquired who was to be the happy man. The minister told him to be at the church on Sabbath, and he would then tell him. Imagine David's surprise when the text was given out. "Nathan said unto David, thou art the man."

### "A Fellow Feeling makes us Wondrous Kind"

*Swell*: "Had no breakfast?"

*Sweeper*: "No, sir!"

*Swell*: "Paw beggaw! and no dinner?"

*Sweeper*: "No, sir!"

*Swell*: "Paw beggaw!"

*Sweeper*: "Got e'er a copper, yer honor?"

*Swell*: "Naw!"

*Sweeper*: "Paw beggaw!"

### Book-lore

*Bookbinder*: "Oh, your master wants them bound, my man, do he? Well, are they to be done in Russia or Morocco?"

*Rustic*: "Why, stoopid, dust think if he wanted 'em done in Roosia that I'd ev browt 'em 'ere?"

### The Possibilities of Childhood

Johnny lost his knife. After searching in one pocket and another, until he had been through all without success, he exclaimed: "Oh, dear! I wish I had another pocket; it might be in that."

**The Infallibility of every Child's "Papa"**

"My pa is a preacher, an' he will go to heaven."

"Yes, an' my pa is a doctor, an' can kill your old pa."

**Blindness Somewhere**

"Did you take the note, and did you see Mr. Thompson, Jock?"

"Yes, sir."

"And how was he?"

"Why he looked pretty well, but he's very blind."

"Blind! what do you mean?"

"Why, while I wur in the room he axed me wher' my hat wur, and I'm blest if it wurn't on my head all the while!"

**"Wit" and the "Opposite"**

Dryden and Otway lived opposite to each other in Queen Street. Otway, coming home one night from the tavern, chalked upon Dryden's door, "Here lives John Dryden; he is a *wit*."

Dryden knew the handwriting, and, the next day, chalked on Otway's door, "Here lives Tom Otway; he is *opposite*."

**Appropriate Reproof of One Accustomed to go  
Mooning About**

The Duchess of Newcastle who wrote many plays and romances, in the most extravagant taste of the reign of Charles II, asked Bishop Wilkins how she could get up to the world he had discovered in the moon; for, as the way must needs be long, a person traveling thither would require to have some resting-places by the way.

"Oh, madam," said the bishop, "your grace who has built so many castles in the air can be at no loss."

**"What's often Thought, but ne'er so well  
Expressed"**

The Rev. Mr. Perkins being called upon suddenly to address a Sunday-school, thought he would get a few original ideas from his young hearers.

"Children," said he, "I want some of you to tell me what I shall talk to you about to-night. What shall I say?"

At first there was no response.

"That bright little fellow over there," said he, pointing to a youngster on one of the back seats—"What shall I say to you to-night?"

In a little piping voice came the answer: "Say amen and sit down."

### The Bishop, the Boy, and the Banbury Cake

A short time after the present Bishop of Worcester had been appointed to that see he had occasion to travel through Banbury by rail. Being desirous to test, and at the same time encourage the far-famed industry of the town, and as the train stopped for a short time in the station, he beckoned to a boy, and inquired the price of the celebrated cakes.

"Threepence each, sir," said the boy.

Handing him sixpence, the bishop desired him to bring one to the carriage, adding, "And with the other threepence buy one for yourself."

The boy shortly returned, complacently munching his Banbury, and handing threepence in coppers to the bishop, exclaimed, "There was only one left, guv'nor!"

### Taken "Off-Duty"

A certain exacting lawyer had his portrait taken in his favorite attitude—standing with his hand in his pocket. His friends and clients went to see it, and everybody exclaimed, "Oh, how like! It's the very picture of him!"

An old farmer, however, was not satisfied with it. "Don't you see," said he, "he has got his hand in his own pocket? 'Twould be as like again if he had it in somebody else's!"

### A Child Thrust

"You never saw my hands as dirty as that," said a mother, reproachfully, to her little eight-year-old girl.

"'Cause I never saw you when you was a little girl," was the prompt answer.

### **A Snob Wittily Snubbed**

At a railway refreshment room, one of the passengers was hungry and in a hurry. "Please pass me them pertaters, mister," he said, addressing an elegant gentleman who sat next to him.

The latter slowly focussed his gold eye-glass on the speaker. "Did you think I was one of the waiters?" he asked, icily.

The others held their knives and forks suspended in mid-air, expecting to see the man shrivel up; but no such phenomenon took place. He turned, and beckoned to the nearest waiter.

"George, come here, please."

"What is it, sir?" asked George.

"I want to apologize to you, that is all. You see, I mistook this party here for you, but I hope you won't be offended at it. Now, pass me them pertaters, and we'll go on with the rest of the meal."

### **A Well-Prepared "Brief"**

"Mr. Brief," said the judge, grimly, "it seems to me that you are wasting time; you might as well attempt to make the court believe that two and two do not make four."

Brief settled his eye-glasses a little more firmly on his nose, and responded blandly, "May it please your lordship, I am prepared to do that. Two and two make twenty-two."

The shadow of a smile played round the corner of the judge's mouth as he sat back in his chair and said, "You can proceed, Mr. Brief."

### **A Humorous "Cabby"**

On one occasion two ladies had paid a cabman a shilling for the distance they had ridden, with one four-penny bit, two threepenny pieces, one penny and two halfpence; when cabby looked at the coins and asked, "Well, how long might you have been saving up for this little treat?"

**The Domestic Catechism**

While on business in the office of a printing-house the other day, a thin, tired-looking man entered, and, approaching the proprietor, said, "I want to have a list printed. Suppose you write it down as I tell you."

The proprietor made ready, and the man said: "Yes; I'm sure I locked the front door. Have you got that?"

"Yes; but I don't understand."

"Never mind; don't interrupt me till I have finished. Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"I turned out the light in the bath-room."

"All right; I've got it."

"The kitchen windows are fastened."

"Yes."

"The dog is in the cellar."

"Yes."

"I did not forget to put ashes on the furnace fire."

"Yes."

"The servants are all in."

"Yes."

"The stable door is locked."

"Yes."

"No; the water is not running in the bath-room."

"Yes."

"The kitten is out-doors."

"Yes."

"I turned off the draughts of the range."

"Yes."

"No; I do not smell smoke."

"Yes."

"I do not think I hear anyone trying to get into the house."

"Yes."

"No; that is not our dog barking; it's the one next door."

"Yes."

"It's not necessary to go down and see if the cellar-door is fastened; I know it is."

"Yes."

"That is nobody; only the wind rattling the shutters."

"Yes."

"Well, I think that's about all. You see, my wife asks me those questions every night just as I am getting into bed, and if I had a printed list I could show to her it would save lots of trouble, and besides that, it injures my lungs to answer them. Have the list printed as soon as possible, please."

### **Make it Look as Well as Possible**

A lady was once lamenting the ill-luck which attended her affairs, when a friend, wishing to console her, bade her "look upon the bright side."

"Oh," she cried, "there seems to be no bright side!"

"Then polish up the dark side!" was the reply.

### **A Second St. Paul—in Some Things**

A gentleman interceded with his bishop for a clergyman, who was in debt, and who had on more than one occasion been imprisoned at the instance of his creditors. He urged the abilities of his friend, which, notwithstanding his delinquencies, were of no small order.

"He is, in fact, my lord, really and truly a St. Paul."

"Yes," replied the bishop, sarcastically; "in prisons oft."

### **Mr. Spurgeon on Modern Bonnets**

Mr. Spurgeon was once asked to lash the prevailing folly, the invisible bonnet. This he did in the following words: "I have been requested to rebuke the bonnets of the day." All faces were immediately upturned, and, scanning the ladies of the congregation, he added: "Really I see none!" A more bitter rebuke any other words could not have conveyed.

### **A Skeleton Account Collector**

A doctor's servant-man came to announce a patient who was unfavorably known as a wealthy skinflint, insolent, and overbearing withal, and a notoriously

bad payer. The doctor ordered the patient to be shown in, and offered him a chair in such a position as to be in full view of a skeleton standing in one corner of the room.

"Ah!" exclaimed the patient, somewhat scared. "a skeleton!"

"Yes, sir," replied the doctor, "it is that of one of my deceased patients. He never would pay his fees, and so I was compelled to sue the relatives for his bones."

"I will slip in again presently! good morning, doctor!" and the patient hastily retired.

Next morning the doctor received payment in full of his long-standing account.

### Taking Care of the Wrong Key

"Joseph," said the merchant to the bright young man with the best references, "the bookkeeper tells me that you have lost the key of the safe, and cannot get at the books."

"Yes, sir; one of them. You gave me two, you remember."

"Yes, I had duplicates made in case of accident. And the other?"

"Oh, sir, I took care of that. I was afraid I might lose one of them, you know."

"And is the other all right?"

"Yes, sir. I put it where there was no danger of its being lost. It is in the safe, sir."

### Non-Convertible Terms

A well-known divine rebuked an ignorant preacher for exercising his oratorical gift. In defence, the man said: "We are commanded to preach the gospel to every critter."

"Yes," replied the divine, "but every critter is not commanded to preach the gospel."

### Hard on the Donkey

A commercial traveler who occupied the same railway carriage with a clergyman, asked him if he had ever heard that in Paris as often as a priest was

hanged a donkey was hanged at the same time. The victim of the joke replied in his blandest manner: "Well, then, let us both be thankful that we are not in Paris."

### **An Answer by Return**

*Counsel*: "How do you identify the handkerchief?"

*Witness*: "By its general appearance, and the fact that I have others like it."

*Counsel*: "That's no proof, for I have got one just like it in my pocket."

*Witness*: "I don't doubt that, as I had more than one of the same sort stolen."

### **Diplomacy—or, Silence in view of Possible Preferment**

Sir Robert Walpole, once wanting to carry a question in the House of Lords, and not being quite sure of some of the bishops, prevailed upon the Archbishop of Canterbury to stay at home for two or three days; in the meantime Sir Robert circulated a report that his grace was dangerously ill. On the day of meeting the House was remarkably crowded with lawn sleeves, not one of whom voted against the minister.

### **One New Leaf Quite Enough for One Turn**

Negligence in reading sometimes produces whimsical coincidences. An old Joe Miller records the story of a clergyman, who, reading to his congregation a chapter in Genesis, found the last sentence in the page to be, "And the Lord gave unto Adam a wife, and she—" turning over two leaves together, he found written, and read it in an audible voice—"was pitched within and without." He had unhappily got into the middle of a description of Noah's ark.

### **A Thorny Subject**

When Milton was blind he married a shrew. The Duke of Buckingham called her a rose. "I am no judge of colors," replied Milton, "and it may be so, for I feel the thorns daily."

### Hard on "The Bench"

A counselor was one day asked by the judge, why he, as a man of talents and integrity, was always employed in knavish causes. "Why, I have been so much in the habit of losing good causes that I think I had better undertake bad ones."

### Attending to Each Other's Faults

A Quaker coming to town with his team was laid hold of, and taken before a justice, for riding upon the shafts of his cart, and fined forty shillings. The Quaker, without hesitation, threw down two guineas, when the justice offered him two shillings change. "Ay," says the Quaker, "but thou hast been at so much trouble, thee mayest keep the two shillings to thyself; only thou write it down on a bit of paper for my satisfaction"; which the justice accordingly did, and gave a receipt for two guineas, but not upon stamped paper. The Quaker immediately went to a neighboring justice, showed him the receipt, told him he had just taken it, and asked if it was according to law? "No," said the justice, "it should have been stamped." On this the justice who levied the fine was brought before the quorum, and fined the penalty of five pounds.

### Childish Wit and Wisdom

It was a good thought of a little girl who was at dinner among a large party (fearing she had been forgotten to be helped) to crumble some bread upon her plate, saying at the same time to a boiled chicken near her, "*Come, biddy, come!*"

### Public School Equity

A gentleman resident at Harrow, made frequent complaints to the masters of the great school there, of his garden being stripped of its fruit, even before it became ripe—but to no purpose.

Tired of applying to the masters for redress, he at length appealed to the boys, and, sending for one to

his house, he said, "Now, my good fellow, I'll make this agreement with you and your companions : let the fruit remain on the trees till it becomes ripe, and I promise to give you half."

The boy coolly replied, "I can say nothing to the proposition, sir, myself, but will make it known to the rest of the boys, and inform you of their decision to-morrow."

Next day came, and brought with it this reply : "The gentlemen of Harrow cannot agree to receive so unequal a share, since Mr.— is an individual, and we are many."

### Dining Late

Some one remarking that the dinner-hour was always getting later and later, "Ay," quoth Sam Rogers, "it will soon end in our not dining till to-morrow."

### His Own—with Usury

A cornet of hussars, who was not the most polished in his manners, having joined his regiment, was asked by his colonel what his father was.

"A farmer," said the cornet.

"Pity your father did not make you follow his trade."

"Pray, sir," asked the cornet, "what is your father?"

"A gentleman, sir."

"Pity he did not make you one," replied the cornet.

### The Archbishop and the Archdeacon

(Poem alleged by the author to have been composed by the Archbishop of Canterbury on the day his grace "deprived" Mr. Denison.)

Transubstantiation is vexation,  
Consubstantiation is as bad ;  
Archdeacon D—— doth trouble me,  
And I rather think he's mad.

—J. B. CANTUAR. [1]

### The Strength of Political Bias

A grand success rewarded the ingenious device of a physician, having to deal with a very obstinate patient, whose weak point, or strong point, was his implacable Toryism. The patient was a West of England bishop. He was very ill, and to expedite recovery, his physician prescribed small doses of brandy, to be taken at regular intervals.

Now the prelate hated brandy, and declared he would have none of it. In vain did the physician insist upon the duty he owed to his diocese, his wife, and his family; and when he suggested that his lordship had better make arrangements for his departure from this world, as without brandy he must die, the bishop calmly answered that he was prepared to die, but he would not touch the brandy.

Walking up to the head of the bed, the doctor bent over the refractory man, and whispered in his ear: "Need I remind you that Russell is in office, and a Whig will be your successor to the bishopric!"

"Fetch the brandy, doctor!" cried the bishop; "I'll drink a quart if necessary!"

The ruse succeeded.

### Two Negatives Imply an Affirmation

Dr. Wayland had a boy about six years old, who was anything but a fool. The doctor placed him under the care of one of the students, with the charge that he should not go out without permission from his tutor.

"May I go out?" at length inquired our hero.

"No," was the laconic reply.

A few minutes' pause followed. "May I go out?" again inquired the boy.

"No," was again the response.

The miniature edition of the doctor slowly rose from his seat, took up his cap, and pushed for the door.

"Stop!" said the tutor. "Do you know what 'no' means?"

"Yes," said Charlie; "it is a particle of negation,

and two of them coming together are equivalent to an affirmation."

His wit was his passport.

### **"Where are We?"**

"What would our wives say if they knew where we are?" said the captain of a schooner when they were beating about in a fog, fearful of going ashore.

"Humph! I shouldn't mind that," replied the mate, "if we only knew where we were ourselves."

### **Destructive Criticism**

An instance of astonishing quickness is related of the witty Duke of Buckingham. Being present at the first representation of one of Dryden's pieces of heroic nonsense where a lover says, "My wound is great because it is *so small!*" the duke cried out, "Then 'twould be greater were it *none at all!*" The play was instantly ruined.

### **The Letter H**

Rowland Hill, when at college, was remarkable for his wit. In a conversation on the powers of the letter H, in which it was contended that it was no letter, but a simple aspiration of breathing, Rowland took the opposite side of the question, insisted on its being to all intents and purposes a letter, and concluded by observing that if it were not it was a very serious affair to him, as it would occasion his being "ill" all the days of his life.

### **"Change" and "Rest"**

The man who went to the country for rest and change of air says the waiters get the *change*, at least the most of it, and the landlord the *rest*.

### **The Power of Emphasis**

A poor woman of Shoreham, whose husband was going to sea, handed, through the clerk, to the parson, this public prayer: "A man going to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation."

The parson, pointing it in his own way, read to the ears of the flock: "A man going to *see his wife*, desires the prayers of the congregation."

An elderly gentleman being ill, one of his friends sent a messenger with the usual inquiry, which, however, he had not pronounced with due emphasis—"I'll thank you to take my compliments, and ask *how* old Mr. W— is?" The messenger departed on his errand and speedily returned, saying, "He's just sixty-eight, sir!"

### How to Treat the Hands

One of our brilliant college youths was heard lately complaining in the presence of the family about how difficult he found it to behave when in society with as much ease and gracefulness as he could wish.

"Why," he said at last, with a look of the utmost self-humiliation on his face, "if you'll believe me, I get so at times that I don't know what to do with my hands."

Then the youngest member of the family, who cared little for society and less for his elders, brought down the house by remarking heartlessly: "Why don't you wash them?"

### A Witty Dean Checkmated

A friend of Dean Swift one day sent him a turbot as a present by a servant-lad, who had frequently been on similar errands, but had never received anything from the dean. He opened the study door, and putting the fish on the floor, cried out rudely: "My master has sent you a turbot."

"Young man," said the dean, "is that the way you deliver a message? Let me teach you better manners. Sit down in my chair. We will change places and I will show you how to behave in future."

The boy sat down, and the dean going out, came to the door and, making a low bow, said:

"Sir, my master sends you his kind compliments, and hopes you are well, and requests your acceptance of a small present."

"Indeed!" replied the boy. "Return him my best thanks; and there is half a crown for yourself."

The dean, thus caught in his own trap, laughed heartily and gave the boy a crown for his ready wit.

**A Carefully-trained Witness**

A boy about twelve years old was an important witness in a lawsuit. One of the lawyers, after cross-questioning him severely, said: "Your father has been talking to you and telling you how to testify, hasn't he?"

"Yes," said the boy.

"Now," said the lawyer, "just tell us how your father told you to testify."

"Well," said the boy, modestly, "father told me that the lawyers would try and entangle me in my testimony, but if I would just be careful and tell the truth I could tell the same thing every time."

**Skin and Bone versus Flesh and Blood**

At the time when the price of corn was very high, Dr. Byrom, of Manchester, wrote the following epigram on two millers, who were said to have combined to raise the price still higher:

"Bone and Skin,  
Two millers thin,  
Would starve the town, or near it;  
But be it known  
To Skin and Bone,  
That flesh and blood won't bear it."

**Cobbett and the Goose**

When Cobbett kept a stationer's shop at Philadelphia, and was writing under the name of "Peter Porcupine," a young sub went to buy some quills, and thinking to pass a joke upon Peter, asked him if they were not Porcupine quills. Upon which Cobbett, taking up the red coat's money, drily replied, making at the same time a very profound bow, "Oh, no, sir! they are a *goose's*."

**No "Manners" to Spare**

"You had better ask for manners than money," said a finely-dressed gentleman to a beggar who asked for alms.

"I asked for what I thought you had the most of," was the cutting reply.

### Filial Solicitude and Long Life

The evening before a battle, an officer asked Marshal Toiras for permission to go and see his father, who was at the point of death.

"Go," said the marshal, who saw through his pretext: "honor thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land."

### The Fly Declining the Spider's Invitation

A recruiting sergeant, addressing an honest country bumpkin in one of the streets of Manchester, with "Come, my lad, thou'l fight for thy king, won't thou?"

"Voight for my king!" answered Hodge; "why, has he *fawned* out wi' ony body?"

### "Playing the Fool"

A lady beating time on a table, as destitute of harmony as tune, asked another if she knew what she played. "I do," answered she; "you are playing the fool."

### The Inflexibility of "Habit"—both in Name and Nature

"Habit" is hard to overcome. If you take off the first letter it does not change "a bit." If you take off another you still have a "bit" left. If you take off still another the whole of "it" remains. If you take another, it is not totally used up. All of which shows that if you wish to get rid of "habit," you must throw it off altogether.

### A Child's Definition of Happiness

A little girl in Norwich gave this pretty definition of the word happy: "To feel as if you wanted to give all your things to your little sister."

### No Escaping the Collection on that Occasion

On one occasion Rowland Hill was preaching for a public charity, when a note was handed to him inquiring if it would be right for a bankrupt to contribute. He noticed the matter in the course of his

sermon, and pronounced decidedly that such a person could not do so in Christian honesty. "But, my friends," he added, "I would advise you who are not insolvent not to pass the plate this evening, as the people will be sure to say, 'There goes the bankrupt!'"

### A Woman's Reason for Preferring Extempore Preaching

An English clergyman asked an uneducated woman whether she liked his written or unwritten sermons the best. After thinking a few moments, she said: "Why, I loike yo' the best without the book, because yo' keep saying the same thing over and over again, and that helps me to remember what I hear a good deal better."

### Up and "Doing"

The father of a young man who devotes more attention to gaming, horse-racing, etc., than to business, was met by a friend, who asked him what his son Jack was doing now.

"Doing, sir?" said the papa—"doing his father, as usual."

### A Lesson to Clients

Two lawyers, when a knotty case was o'er,  
Shook hands, although they wrangled hard before;  
"Zounds!" said the client who was cast, "pray, how  
Can you be friends, that were such foes just now?"  
"You fool," says one, "we lawyers, though so keen,  
Like shears, ne'er cut ourselves—but what's between?"

### A Good Conundrum

Chelmsford was once considered to be decidedly the worst theatrical town in England. Keeley was fortunate enough to go thither as a star. The first night he acted to a select few, the second night the numbers were scantier than before, and on the third and last night the auditors were few and far between. The last piece was "The Hundred Pound Note," in which Keeley played the conundrum-making Billy Black. In the last scene he advanced to the lights and said,

"I've one more, and this is a good 'un: 'Why is the Chelmsford theatre like a half-moon?' D'ye give it up? Because it is never full."

### Patriarchal Longevity Accounted For

A certain young clergyman, modest almost to bashfulness, was once asked by a country apothecary of a contrary character, in a public and crowded assembly, and in a tone of voice to catch the attention of the whole company, "How it happened that the patriarchs lived to such an extreme old age?" To which impertinent question he immediately replied, "Perhaps they took no physic."

### Modern Commercial Penalties

Talking about busy men who leave their homes early and get back after dark, and never see their children; a man of that sort was hurrying away one morning when he found that his little boy had got up before him, and was playing on the side-walk. He told the child to go in. The child wouldn't and the man spanked him, and went to business. The child went in howling.

The mother said, "What's the matter?"

"Man hit me," blubbered the youngster.

"What man?"

"That man that stays here Sundays."

### An Accommodating Exciseman

Early in the nineteenth century a countryman was stopped by a revenue officer, who took from him two casks of spirits, and, carrying the same to the next town—a distance of fifteen miles—was desired by the countryman to stop and leave it at the first public-house.

The officer replied: "No; I have seized it, and it must go to the excise office."

"Not so, master," said the countryman; "I have a little bit of paper here, which if you'll take the trouble of reading, will convince you I am right."

The officer, reading his bit of paper, exclaimed:

"Why, you rogue, this is a permit. Why did you not show me this sooner?"

"Because," said he, "if I had, you would not have carried the liquor so far for me."

### **"Without Knowledge or Understanding"**

"Doctor," said a person once to a surgeon, "my daughter has had a terrible fit this morning; she continued full half an hour without knowledge or understanding."

"Oh," replied the doctor, "never mind that; many people continue so all their lives."

### **The Gallant Butcher**

In a country market, a lady, laying her hand on a joint of veal said, "I think, Mr.—this veal is not quite so white as usual." "Put on your glove, madam," replied the dealer, "and you will think differently." The veal was ordered home without another word of objection.

### **Not "Forever!"**

When Mr. Wilberforce was a candidate for Hull, his sister, an amiable and witty young lady, offered the compliment of a new gown to each of the wives of those freemen who voted for her brother—on which she was saluted with a cry of "Miss Wilberforce forever!"—when she pleasantly observed, "I thank you, gentlemen; but I cannot agree with you—for, really, I do not wish to be *Miss Wilberforce forever!*"

### **Lamb and Coleridge**

"Charles," said Coleridge one day to Lamb, "did you ever hear me preach?"

"I never heard you do anything else," said Lamb.

### **Necessary Evils**

A gentleman was in the habit of calling his servants, before their faces, "Necessary evils." He quarreled with one of them, who left him in a rage, said he was sick of service, and vowed that he would never enter

it again. A few days after, his old master, meeting him in livery, said, "Poh! you are gone into service after all!" "Ah, sir, I have found that masters are necessary evils."

### Not Deaf Enough to go to Concerts

Lord North, who had a great antipathy to music, being asked why he did not subscribe to the Ancient Concerts, and it being urged as a reason for it that his brother, the Bishop of Winchester, did, "Ay," replied his lordship, "if I were as deaf as my brother, I would subscribe, too."

### One Thankful—the Other Glad

When Dr. Johnson had completed his dictionary, which had quite exhausted the patience of Mr. Andrew Miller, his bookseller, the latter acknowledged the receipt of the last sheet in the following note: "Andrew Miller sends his compliments to Mr. Samuel Johnson, with the money for the last sheet of the copy of the dictionary, and thanks God he has done with him."

To this rude note the doctor returned the following smart answer: "Samuel Johnson returns his compliments to Mr. Andrew Miller, and is very glad to find (as he does by his note) that Andrew Miller has the grace to thank God for anything."

### Silencing a Scoffer

Mr. Rees, a well-known preacher, was once accosted by a would-be wag, and questioned as follows: "Do you believe the Bible what it says about the prodigal son and the fatted calf?"

"Certainly I do."

"Well, can you tell me whether the calf that was killed was a male or female calf?"

"Yes, it was a female calf."

"How do you know that?"

"Because," said Rees, looking the man in the face, "I see the male is alive now."

### A Well-timed "Grace"

Dr. Pease, Dean of Ely, was once at dinner when, just as the cloth was removed, the subject of discourse happened to be that of extraordinary mortality among lawyers.

"We have lost," said a gentleman, "not less than six eminent barristers in as many months."

The dean, who was very deaf, rose as his friend finished his remarks and gave the company grace: "For this, and every other mercy, make us truly thankful."

### Proclaiming His Ignorance

*Judge:* "Your Christian name and surname?"

*Prisoner (taken up for vagrancy):* "Ah, anybody can see you are new to the place. All your predecessors knew me well enough."

### Burning His Idol

An eminent divine was both a great wag and a great smoker.

"Ha, there you are," cried a lady, who surprised him one day with a pipe in his mouth, "at your idol again!"

"Yes, madam," replied he, coolly, "burning it."

### A Clever Juror

A juror having applied to the judge to be excused from serving on account of deafness, the judge said: "Could you hear my charge to the jury, sir?" "Yes, I heard your honor's charge," said the juror; "but I couldn't make any sense out of it." He was excused.

### Granting His Request

"Who's there?" said Jenkins, one cold winter night, disturbed in his repose by some one knocking at the street door.

"A friend," was the answer.

"What do you want?"

"Want to stay here all night."

"Queer taste, ain't it? But stay there by all means," was the benevolent answer.

**Lamb and Mince "Sauce"**

Charles Lamb remarked of one of his critics: "The more I think of him, the less I think of him."

**A Dead Letter**

A good story is told answering the late Rev. W. Barnes, the Dorsetshire poet, which will interest spelling reformers. One day he went into a village school where a little boy and girl were sitting together. The girl was crying, and when he asked the reason she said that Johnny had the word "psalm" to write in his copy-book, "and," she said, with a fresh burst of tears, "he ha' scope out the 'p' with his elbow!" Then Johnny fired up, and said: "What if I did scope of en out? He didn't spell naught, and what was the good of en?"

**The Dean and the Lunatic**

Dean Stanley had great respect for presence of mind, and used with great delight to tell a story of presence of mind by which he liberated himself from a dangerous visitor. Since he was willing to see almost any one who asked for him, he once told his servant to usher into his study a gentleman who had called, and who happened to bear a name which was familiar to him.

When the gentleman appeared he proved to be an entire stranger. It was evident there had been some mistake. This became still more evident when, advancing with an air of great excitement, the gentleman exclaimed: "Sir, I have a message to the Queen from the Most High. I beg that you will deliver it instantly."

"In that case," said the dean, taking up his hat, "there is not a moment to be lost. Let us go at once." They went down stairs into the hall, and, opening the door, the dean requested his visitor to step out. No sooner had he done so than the dean shut the door behind the lunatic.

### A Cutting Answer

A well-known clergyman was busily searching in the Minster Library at York, on one occasion, when two young officers of the garrison lounged in. Mistaking him for the verger, they said, "Well, old man, what have you got to show us?"

"Sir," replied the clergyman, "to gentlemen we show the library; to others, the door."

### Quoting the Fathers

The first Protestant Duke of Norfolk, carrying the sword of State before James II to his chapel, stopped at the door, and would go no farther. The king said, "Your father would have gone farther"; to which the duke answered, "Your father would not have gone so far."

### Curious Letter sent by a Quaker to his Watchmaker

I send thee, once more, my erroneous watch, which wants thy speedy care and correction. Since the last time he was at thy school, I find by experience he is not benefited by thy instructions. Thou demandest for thy labor the fifth part of a pound sterling, which thou shalt have, but let thy honest endeavors first earn it. I will board him with thee a little longer, and pay for his table if thou requirest it.

Let thy whole endeavors and observations be upon him, for he has mightily deviated from the principles of truth. I am afraid he is foul in the inward man—I mean his springs. Prove and try him well with the adjusting tools of truth, that, if possible, he may be drawn from the error of his ways.

By the index of his tongue he is a liar, and the motion of his body is ever variable and uncertain. I presume his body is foul, as I before observed; therefore brush him well with thy cleansing instruments from all pollutions, that he may vibrate with regularity and truth; admonish him friendly with patience, and be not too hasty and rash in thy correction, lest, by endeavoring to reduce him from one error, thou shalt fling him headlong into another; for he is

young, and of a malleable temper, he may, with due correction, be brought into the path of truth.

In fine, let him visit often the motion of the sun, and regulate him by his table of equation, and when thou findest them agree, send him home with thy bill of moderation, to thy friend, TOBIAS GOSWELL.

### Sticking at Nothing

Tom Burnet, son of Bishop Burnet, happened to be at dinner at the Lord Mayor's, in the latter part of Queen Annie's reign, when the Tories were for a short space triumphant. After two or three healths, "The Ministry" was toasted. Tom, unwilling to compromise his principles by drinking to a cabinet he could not approve of, endeavored to escape by telling a story to a person who sat next to him. This, however, would not do with the Lord Mayor, who, observing a full glass on the table, called out, "Gentlemen, where sticks the ministry?"

"At nothing," replied the Whig, and immediately drank off his glass.

### Homage to the Scottish Rifles. (By a Spiteful Competitor.)

It seems that the Scots

Turn out much better shots

At long distance, than most of the Englishmen are:

But this we all knew

That a Scotchman could do—

Make a small piece of metal go awfully far. [1]

### Sydney Smith and the Stout Widow

As an instance of the way in which Sydney Smith clung to a joke, and would not let it go until he had got all the fun out of it, we may quote his description of a voluminous widow, whom an ambitious young man was about to marry: "Going to marry her!" he exclaimed, bursting out laughing; "going to marry her! Impossible! You mean a part of her. He could not marry her all himself. It would be a case, not of bigamy, but of trigamy. The neighborhood or the magistrates should interfere. There is enough of

her to furnish wives for the whole parish. One man marry her! It is monstrous! You might people a colony with her, or give an assembly with her, or perhaps take your morning walk round her—always supposing there were frequent resting places, and you were in rude health. I once was rash enough to try walking round her myself, but only got half-way, and gave it up exhausted. Or you might read the Riot Act and disperse her: in short, you might do anything with her but marry her.” [2]

### **A Novelty in the Way of a Loan**

“I say, Jack,” shouted a Smithfield drover the other day to his pal, “these sheep won’t move in this weather—lend us a bark of your dog, will ye?”

### **The Human Side of Royalty**

A Spanish ambassador one day entered rather unexpectedly into a room in which Henry IV was discovered on all fours, with his little son upon his back. The king stopped, and looking earnestly at the ambassador, said to him, “Pray, sir, have you any children!”

“Yes, sir; several.”

“Well, then, I shall complete my round,” and he immediately set off on hands and knees again, till both boy and father were tired with the sport.

### **The “Form” which Gives the Rite Meaning**

At a recent examination of girls in Cheshire for the rite of confirmation, in answer to the question, “What is the outward and visible sign and form in baptism?” the reply was, “The baby, sir.”

### **A Forget-me-not**

Douglas Jerrold was walking with a party of literati in the country, and in the course of their walk they stopped to notice the gambols of a little donkey. A very sentimental poet present said he should like to send the little thing as a present to his mother. “Do,” replied Jerrold, “and tie a piece of paper round its neck, with the motto, ‘When this you see, remember me.’” [4]

## The Treaty Explained

[The Treaty of Peace concluded after the Crimean War met with very little favor.]

"Papa, you came up to my bed,  
And called me 'little sleepy-head,'  
About a month ago,  
And made me wake and hear the guns,  
Telling all London-town at once,  
That there was peace, you know."

"My angel child, I did by thee  
That which my father did to me;  
You fancied it unkind;  
But no, my love; some day you'll tell  
Your children you remember well  
When this new peace was signed."

"It was quite kind of you to take  
The trouble, pa, to make me wake,  
Upon that Sunday night;  
But, pa, I wish you'd tell me what  
To tell my children, that we got  
By all this dreadful fight?"

"My darling, yes, I'm very glad  
That, like a prudent little lad,  
You ask such questions, dear.  
We've got a treaty—that is, mind,  
A paper which great folks have signed,  
To put things straight and clear."

"A paper—one that I can read?"  
"No, love, I think you'd not succeed,  
Although it's a translation.  
It's made in chapters, thirty-four,  
With twenty protocols, or more,  
Besides a declaration."

"But tell me, pa, what it's about:  
Some one, you know, must make it out,  
Or nobody's the better."  
"Well, dear, I'll try, if you'll attend—  
The spirit you can comprehend,  
So never mind the letter."

"All what we've taken from the Czar,  
 From the beginning of the war,  
 We are to give him back ;  
 Sebastopol, and six more towns,  
 And the Crimean hills and downs,  
 We must surrender, whack.

"All the strong forts he had before,  
 Along the Black Sea's Asian shore,  
 He is to have again,  
 That he may bring his armies there,  
 And make the brave Circassian bear  
 His long-resisted chain.

"If he raise and take away  
 The ships he sank, my dear, he may  
 And to the Baltic steer 'em ;  
 To have them ready there at need.  
 One of these day the Dane or Swede  
 May find them much too near him.

"He's not to pay a single sou  
 Of all the cost he's put us to,  
 That forty millions—blow him ;  
 Nor give one single guarantee  
 That what he promises shall be  
 Performed—and yet we know him.

"And we ourselves are so polite  
 That we resign the ancient right  
 We held against the world.  
 'Twas the old Sea-king's gallant brag  
 The homage paid by every flag,  
 When England's flag unfurled."

"But, pa, you've only told me, yet,  
 What these fine Russians are to get,  
 Tell me what they're to do :  
 I hoped our men, who fought so brave,  
 Had punished them, and they'd behave  
 Much better—didn't you ? "

" My love, that's what we're thankful for,  
 We've gained the objects of the war,  
 Hearing, from Russian lips,  
 The Czar will let the Turks alone,  
 Will not rebuild some forts of stone,  
 Or build big Black Sea ships.

" And (years to come, though, I'm afraid)  
 The Danube will be free for trade—  
 That's all the gain we reap."

" My own papa, mine honored sire,  
 When those park guns began to fire,  
 You might have let me sleep." [1]

### Sydney Smith on the Education of Women

Sydney Smith wrote thus in the *Edinburgh Review*, on the then vexed question of Female Education : " There is a very general notion that the moment you put the education of women upon a better foundation than it is at present, at that moment there will be an end of all domestic economy ; and that if you once suffer women to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will soon be reduced to the same kind of aerial and unsatisfactory diet. Can anything," he continues, in his own most characteristic style, " be more perfectly absurd than to suppose that the care and perpetual solicitude which a mother feels for her children depends upon her ignorance of Greek and mathematics ; and that she would desert her infant for a quadratic equation ? " [2]

### Thankful for Small Mercies

An eccentric banker was eyeing with suspicious vision a bill presented to him for discounting. " You need not fear," said the palpitating customer ; " one of the parties keeps his carriage." " Ay ! " rejoined the banker, " I shall be glad if he keeps his feet."

### " Smoking"—an Explanation

" I wish you would not smoke cigars," said a young lady to her lover. " Why not smoke as well as your chimney ? " " Because chimneys don't smoke when they are in good order."

**"At Home on Thursdays"**

An aristocratic lady, meeting a beggar all in rags, gave him her card, saying : "Here is my address. If you call any time you can have some of my husband's left-off clothes." A few days after she saw the poor fellow again in the street. "Why did you not come as I told you?" "Please, ma'am, this is Wednesday, and on your card it says : 'At home on Thursdays.'"

**From the Sublime to the Ridiculous**

A good example at once of the limitation—the frontier line, so to say, between beauty and wit—and at the same time of the single step that separates the sublime and ridiculous, is where the surprise is made to result from a sudden change from the sublime to the ridiculous, as for instance in the following lines :

**THE GRAVEDIGGER**

"Old man, old man, for whom dig'st thou this grave?"  
I asked as I walk'd along:  
For I saw in the heart of London streets  
A dark and busy throng.

'Twas a strange wild deed ; but a stranger wish  
Of the parted soul to lie  
Midst the troubled numbers of living men,  
Who would pass him idly by !

So I said : "Old man, for whom dig'st thou this grave  
In the heart of London town ?"  
And the deep-toned voice of the digger replied :  
"We're a-laying a gas-pipe down." [3]

**Sydney Smith's Political Simile**

The most formal shape into which fun can fall is perhaps the simile, and a better instance could not be adduced than Sydney Smith's metaphor of Mrs. Partington and her mop, in his speech to the electors at Taunton, on the rejection of the Reform Bill by the Lords :

"The attempt of the Lords to stop reform reminds me very forcibly of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington in the great storm off Sidmouth. In the winter of 1824 there set in a great flood upon that town; the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame P—, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house in mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. P—'s spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle; but she should not have meddled with a tempest. Gentlemen, be at your ease, be quiet and steady. You will beat Mrs. Partington." [2]

### Sink-we Scento

"After five years the Thames is to receive no sewage."—*Sir B. Hall, 1855.*

In shorter time, kind sir, contrive  
To purify our drink;  
For while your figure is a Five  
Our river is a Cinq. [1]

### "Too Many Cooks"

A capital story was told the other day by a public speaker, illustrating the old saying quoted above. The story is about what recently happened to a pair of trousers. The young man to whom they belonged had purchased them for his wedding, but on the eve of that auspicious event he discovered that they were two inches too long. So he went downstairs to his mother and two sisters and informed them of the calamity. They were busy—just sympathized with him vaguely, as people occupied are apt to do, but said no more. To all outward impression the affair had not disturbed them greatly.

On the first spare moment, however, that the mother

had, she went upstairs, cut two inches off the trousers, hemmed them, and returned downstairs without being missed.

Just as they were sitting down to supper the elder sister suddenly remembered John's request, slipped away quietly, and went and removed another two inches, hemmed them as her mother had done, and returned to the party without mentioning what she had done.

The party broke up, bedtime arrived, and now the younger flew impatiently to remove the difficulty in her brother's attire, and again the trousers were diminished by two inches.

So the story ends. What became of the bridegroom on the morrow, and whether he appeared at church in his shortened garments, or wore another pair, is all left to the imagination.

### Definition of a Pilgrim

A good story is told of one of her Majesty's inspectors of mid-England. Examining a school on one occasion, Mr. K— inquired, "What is a pilgrim?"

After a pause a sturdy little imp boldly answered, "A pilgrim is a man, please, sir."

"A man?" returned the inspector, severely. "That won't do. Tell me some more about a pilgrim."

Another pause, broken by the examiner this time. "*I'm* a man, you know," he said, rashly; "*am I* a pilgrim?"

Here followed no pause, but the prompt rejoinder: "Oh, no, sir; a pilgrim's a *good* man, sir."

It was rather the bystanders, than the questioner or the questioned, who did not know which way to look.

### A Collision—Illustrated

One of our school teachers was endeavoring to explain to a small boy in her class the meaning of the word "collision." She said: "Suppose two boys running in the street should come together hard; what would there be?" "A fight," responded the little fellow, loudly, and with astonishing promptness

## The Golden Rule

(Improved from Watts and Gladstone)

Be you to others kind and true,  
 As you'd have others be to you,  
 And neither do nor say to men  
 Whate'er you would not like again ;  
 But if men do and say to you  
 That which is neither kind nor true,  
 Take a good stick, and say to men,  
 "Don't say or do that same again." [1]

## Sydney Smith on the Preaching of the Clergy

Apropos of sermons, to wit, Sydney Smith said : "The English, generally remarkable for doing very good things in a very bad manner, seem to have reserved the maturity and plenitude of their awkwardness for the pulpit. A clergyman clings to his velvet cushion with either hand, keeps his eye riveted upon his book, speaks of the ecstacies of joy and fear with a voice and a face which indicate neither, and pinions his body and soul into the same attitude of limb and thought, for fear of being called theatrical and affected. The most intrepid veteran of us all does no more than wipe his face with his cambric sudarium ; if by mischance his hand slip from its ordinary grip of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimstone, or the caustic iron of the law, and atones for his indecorum by fresh inflexibility and more rigid sameness. Is it wonder, then, that every semi-delirious sectary who pours forth his animated nonsense with the genuine look and voice of passion should gesticulate away the congregation of the most profound and learned divine of the established Church, and, in two Sundays, preach him *bare to the very sexton !*" [2]

## Justice—Only Delayed

The late Lord Cockburn's looks, tones, language, and manner were always such as to make one think that he believed every word he said. On one occasion, before he was raised to the bench, when defending a murderer, although he failed to convince the judge and

jurymen of the innocence of his client, yet he convinced the murderer himself that he was innocent. Sentence of death was pronounced, and the day of execution was fixed for, say, the 20th of January. As Lord Cockburn was passing the condemned man the latter seized him by the gown, saying, "I have not got justice, Mr. Cockburn—I have not got justice!" To this the advocate coolly replied : "Perhaps not ; but you'll get it on the 20th of January."

### Comparisons are " Hideous "

Some time since a wedding breakfast was given by a substantial farmer blessed with five daughters, the oldest being the bride, when a neighbor, a young farmer, who was honored with an invitation, thinking no doubt he ought to say something smart and complimentary upon the event, addressing the bride-groom said, "Well, you have got the pick of the batch!" The countenances of the four unmarried ones, as may be imagined, were a study.

### Here and There, One

Dr. B— being once in a large company at dinner, was seated between Mrs. Lowth and Mrs. Sherlock ; the conversation happened to turn upon wives, when Dr. B— said that he "believed wives in general were good, though to be sure there might be a bad one *here and there*," nodding alternately at the two ladies on each side of him.

### Two Alma Maters—Result

A young country clergyman was boasting of having been educated at two colleges. "You remind me," said an aged divine present, of an instance I knew of a calf that sucked two cows."

"What was the consequence?" said a third person.

"Why, sir," replied the old clergyman, very gravely, "the consequence was, that he was a *very great calf*."

### Mortifying Simplicity

A country gentleman who fills every necessary position to constitute him the head of the village, and who had taken some pains to instruct the rustic inhabitants in the proper signs of respect due to him, being lately on a horse somewhat given to shy, and observing a lad walking before him, called out, "Boy, don't take off your hat." The youth, turning his head, very innocently answered, "*I worn't a-going to do.*"

### Teacher versus Pupil

An incident analogous to that so often associated with the name of Professor Blackie and his classes occurred the other day at a reading school in Gateshead. The pupils, in exuberance of spirits, had just returned to scholastic work after the holidays, and one of the more playful of the number, desirous of aiming a gentle joke at the master, wrote upon the blackboard, "Mr. — is a donkey." The genial and witty teacher, however, was equal to the occasion, for on seeing the inscription, he immediately seized the chalk and added the word "driver." This, of course, made all the difference in the world, and the tables were suddenly turned upon the juvenile scribe and his fellows.

### Two Birds with One Stone

Dr. Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, and Lord Palmerston were on a visit in the country. The premier offered to take the bishop to church in his carriage; the bishop chose to go on foot. A shower came on just as the carriage overtook the pedestrian. The prime minister put his head out of the window with:

"How blest is he who ne'er consents  
By ill advice to walk."

And the bishop immediately retorted with:

"Nor stands in sinners' ways, nor sits  
Where men profanely talk."

**Hearing Both Sides**

A father asked a lazy son what made him lie in bed so long. "I am busied," said he, "in hearing counsel every morning. Industry advises me to get up, Sloth to lie still; and so they give twenty reasons for and against. It is my part to hear what is said on both sides, and, by the time the case is over, dinner is ready."

**An Apprentice and Early Rising**

An industrious tradesman having taken a new apprentice, awoke him the first morning at a very early hour, by calling out that the family were sitting down to table. "Thank you," said the boy, as he turned over in bed to adjust himself for a new nap, "thank you, but I never eat anything during the night."

**Taking Him at his own Price**

A gentleman while skating fell into the water, and ran imminent risk of his life. A man with some difficulty pulled him out. The gentleman rewarded his preserver with a sixpence. The bystanders expressed some surprise respecting the insufficiency of the sum; but the man coolly observed, that the gentleman knew best what his own life was worth, and walked off.

**Dr. Johnson's Childhood**

The trick which most parents play with their children, that of showing off their newly-acquired accomplishments, disgusted Mr. Johnson beyond expression. He had been treated so himself, he said, till he absolutely loathed his father's caresses, because he knew they were sure to precede some unpleasing display of his early abilities; and he used, when neighbors came visiting, to run up a tree that he might not be found and exhibited, such, as no doubt he was, a prodigy of early understanding. His epitaph upon the duck he killed by treading on it at five years old:

"Here lies poor duck  
 That Samuel Johnson trod on;  
 If it had liv'd it had been good luck,  
 For it would have been an odd one"—

is a striking example of early expansion of mind and knowledge of language; yet he always seemed more mortified at the recollection of the bustle his parents made with his wit, than pleased with the thoughts of possessing it. [9]

### A Witty Cleric and an Aged Bridegroom

An old gentleman of eighty years having taken to the altar a young damsel of sixteen, the clergyman said to him, "The font is at the other end of the church." "What do I want of the font?" inquired the old gentleman. "I beg your pardon," said the clerical wit, "I thought you had brought this child to be christened."

### A Lesson on Passive Verbs

A teacher one day endeavoring to make a pupil understand the nature and application of a passive verb, said, "A passive verb is expressive of the nature of receiving an action, as, Peter is beaten. Now, what did Peter do?" The boy, pausing a moment, with the gravest countenance imaginable, replied, "Well, I don't know, without he hollered."

### A Wife's Retort

An elderly lady, telling her age, remarked that she was born on the twenty-second of April. Her husband, who was present, observed, "I always thought you were born on the *first* of April." "People might well judge so," responded the matron, "in the choice I made of a husband."

### Driving it Home

"I owe you one," said a withered old Cœlebs to a lady the other night at a party. "For what?" said she. "Why, for calling me a young gentleman." "If I did so," was the ill-natured reply, "I beg you will not regard it as a compliment, for though an old man you may still be a young gentleman."

### A Double Disgrace

The Rev. Mr. Foote, brother of the celebrated comic wit of that name, being once in a coffee-house, swearing and drinking pretty freely, a Quaker near him said : "Friend, thou art a disgrace to thy cloth!" "No, friend," replied Foote, "my cloth is a disgrace to me," raising his arm and showing a large hole or two in his coat. [11]

### Marriage Certificates

" You say, Mrs. Smith, that you have lived with the defendant for eight years. Does the Court understand from that, that you are a married woman?" "In course it does." "Have you a marriage certificate?" "Yes, your honor, three on 'em—two gals and a boy." Verdict for the plaintiff.

### More Witty than Wise

Dr. Williamson had a quarrel with one of his parishioners by the name of Hardy, who showed considerable resentment. On the succeeding Sunday, the doctor preached from the following text, which he pronounced with great emphasis, and with a significant look at Hardy who was present : "There is no fool like the fool-hardy."

### Matrimony Doth Open the Eyes of the Blind

Friend Grace, it seems, had a very good horse and a very poor one. When seen riding the latter, he was asked the reason. (It turned out that his better-half had taken the good one.) "What," said the bantering bachelor, "how comes it you let your mistress ride the better horse?" The only reply was : "Friend, when thou beest married thee'll know."

### Driven from the Garden

One day as Dr. Young, the author of the "Night Thoughts," was walking in his garden at Welwyn, in company with the two daughters of the Earl of Lichfield, one of whom he afterwards married, the servant came to tell him that a gentleman wished to see him. "Tell him," replied the doctor, "that I am too agree-

ably engaged to change my situation." The ladies insisted he should go, but as persuasion had no effect, one took him by the right arm, the other by the left, and led him to the garden-gate; when, finding resistance in vain, Young bowed and spoke the following lines:—

" Thus Adam look'd when from the garden driven,  
And thus disputed orders sent from heaven;  
Like him I go, but yet to go am loth;  
Like him I go, for angels drove us both;  
Hard was his fate, but mine still more unkind;  
His Eve went with him, but mine stays behind." [11]

### Dr. Johnson on Sermon-Hearers

We were speaking of a gentleman who loved his friend—" Make him prime minister," says Johnson, " and see how long his friend will be remembered." But he had a rougher answer for me: when I commended a sermon preached by an intimate acquaintance of our own at the trading end of the town. " What was the subject, madam?" says Dr. Johnson. " Friendship, sir," replied I. " Why, now, is it not strange that a wise man like our dear little Evans, should take it in his head to preach on such a subject, in a place where no one can be thinking of it?" " Why, what are they thinking upon, sir?" said I. " Why, the men are thinking of their money, I suppose, and the women are thinking of their mops." [9]

### A Keen Request

A luckless undergraduate of Cambridge, being examined for his degree, and failing in every subject upon which he was tried, complained that he had not been questioned upon the things which he knew; upon which the examining master tore off about an inch of paper, and, pushing it towards him, desired him to write upon that all he knew.

### Leaving Room for a Collection and a Correction

The Rev. Sydney Smith, preaching a charity sermon, frequently repeated the assertion that, of all nations, Englishmen were most distinguished for gen-

erosity and the love of their species. The collection happened to be inferior to his expectations, and he said that he had evidently made a great mistake, for that his expression should have been, that they were distinguished for the love of their *specie*.

### A "Personal" Illustration

Sir Fletcher Norton was noted for his want of courtesy. When pleading before Lord Mansfield, on some question of manorial right, he chanced unfortunately to say, "My lord, I can illustrate the point in an instant in my own person: I, myself have two little manors." The judge immediately interposed, with one of his blandest smiles, "We all know it, Sir Fletcher."

### Hardly a Coat Left

Poor H—, the comedian, once so well known in the Manchester and Liverpool theatres, having called in a doctor during a serious fit of illness, was interrogated as to his mode of living. "Did he drink much, and what was the fluid he indulged in?" was inquired. "Brandy and water was his weakness," H— replied, and "he consumed generally from six to twelve glasses per diem, which he had done for many years." "Good heavens!" said the doctor, "I wonder you have any coat left to your stomach!" "Ah, doctor," replied the invalid, "my friends wonder that I have any coat left to my back."

### "Trodden Under Foot"

At an election dinner at Kidderminster—a place celebrated for its manufacture of carpets—this toast was proposed by a townsman: "May the trade of our town always be *trodden under foot*!"

### Reproving—Directly and Indirectly

Dr. South, when once preaching before Charles II, observed that the monarch and his attendants began to nod; and as nobles are common men when they are asleep, some of them soon after snored; on which he broke off his sermon, and exclaimed, "Lord

**Lauderdale**, I am sorry to interrupt your repose, but let me entreat you not to snore so loud, lest you awaken his majesty." [11]

### A Lawyer's Fee

A client, while bathing at sea, saw his lawyer rise up, after a long dive, at his side. "Ho, there Mr. Brief, have you taken out a warrant against Burt?" "He is in gaol," replied the lawyer, and dived again, showing his heels as a parting view to his client; nor did the latter hear more of his interview with the man of law until he got his account containing the entry: "To consultation at sea, a'nt the incarceration of Burt, six-and-eightpence."

### Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit

The following admirable riddle was quoted many years ago in *Notes and Queries*. The authorship of it seems to be involved in obscurity:

"What's that which all love more than life,  
Fear more than death or mortal strife?—  
That which contented men desire—  
The poor possess—the rich require?—  
The miser spends—the spendthrift saves—  
And all men carry to their graves?"

The answer is—"Nothing."

### Cut it Short

The Rev. Dr. Hall said every blade of grass was a sermon. The next day he was amusing himself by clipping his lawn, when a parishioner said: "That's right, doctor; cut your sermons short."

### Splendid Debating Power

Henderson, the actor, was seldom known to be in a passion. When at Oxford he was one day debating with a fellow-student, who, not keeping his temper, threw a glass of wine in the actor's face; when Henderson took out his handkerchief, wiped his face, and coolly said: "That, sir, was a digression; now for the argument."

**Translated Fun**

A schoolmaster who was somewhat of the same way of thinking as Tom Moore's play-loving pedagogues, once said to the present writer, "I always set my lowest Greek class to the *ἀστεῖα* of Hierocles—that Greek Joe Miller—as soon as they are well on in their verbs, and it is a fine example of the *surprise* which is a constant accompaniment of this strange association of ideas to see the joke gradually dawning on the schoolboy mind through the mists of a dead language. Some of these old jokemongers' witticisms are capital—so good, in fact that the parentage of many of them has been claimed by modern wits. No doubt we shall recognize some old friends as we read :

(1) A pedant (for so we must probably translate, in conventional phrase, the pervading scholasticus of the old jokemonger) wishing to teach his horse not to eat much, gave him no food. Eventually the horse died of starvation, and he complained to his friends, "I have suffered a great loss, for just when I had taught my horse to live upon nothing he died."

(2) A pedant having bought a cask of wine, sealed it. But his slave bored a hole and stole the wine. The master was amazed to find that, though his seals were unbroken, the wine gradually diminished. Some one suggested that he should examine whether it had been taken out from the bottom. "Fool," he replied, "it isn't the lower part that's gone; it's the upper."

(3) A pedant suffered shipwreck in a tempest, and seeing the passengers tie themselves to different articles on board, fastened himself to one of the anchors.

(4) Another had to cross a river, and went on board the ferryboat on horseback. Somebody asked him why he did so, and he replied, because he was in a hurry.

(5) Yet another, anxious to know whether he looked well when he was asleep, stood before a looking-glass with his eyes shut to see.

(6) A landlord, who had a house to sell, went about amongst his friends carrying a brick as a specimen. [7]

### The Lady with Holes in Her Stockings

At a religious meeting a lady persevered in standing on a bench and thus intercepting the view of others, though repeatedly requested to sit down. A reverend old gentleman at last rose and said gravely, "I think, if the lady knew that she had a large hole in each of her stockings, she would not exhibit them in this way." This had the desired effect—she immediately sunk down on her seat. A young minister standing by, blushed to the temples, and said, "O brother, how could you say what was not the fact?" "Not the fact!" replied the old gentleman, "if she had not a large hole in each of her stockings, I should like to know how she gets them on."

### Division of Labor, or a Witty Thief

The great Duke of Marlborough, passing the gate of the Tower after having inspected that fortress, was accosted by an ill-looking fellow with, "How do you do, my lord duke? I believe your grace and I have now been in every gaol in the kingdom."

"I believe, friend," replied the duke, with surprise, "this is the only gaol I ever visited."

"Very like," replied the other, "but I have been in all the rest."

### What the Sermon was About

A friend accused another of sleeping in church, which he flatly denied, insisting that he had been awake all the time. "Well, then," said the accuser, "can you tell me what the sermon was about?" "Yes, I can," was the answer: "it was about half an hour too long." [11]

### The Worst "Ism" in Christendom

A zealous, and in his way a very eminent, preacher, whose eloquence is as copious, and far more lucid, than the waters of his beloved Cam, happened to miss

a constant auditor from his congregation. Schism had already made some depredations on the fold, which was not so large but to a practiced eye the deduction of even one was perceptible. "What keeps our friend farmer B— away from us?" was the anxious question proposed by our vigilant minister to his clerk. "I have not seen him amongst us," continued he, "these three weeks; I hope it is not Socinianism that keeps him away?"

"No, your honor," replied the clerk; "it is something worse than that."

"Worse than Socinianism? God forbid it should be Deism!"

"No, your honor; it is something worse than that."

"I trust it is not atheism?"

"Worse than that, sir."

"Worse than atheism? Impossible—nothing can be worse than atheism!"

"Yes, it is, your honor—it is rheumatism."

### Proving that the Earliest Riser was the Greatest Loser

A father chiding his son for not leaving his bed at an earlier hour, told him as an inducement that a certain man being up betimes found a purse of money.

"It might be so," replied the son, "but he that lost it was up before him."

### Magnum Malum

Once when preaching at Wapping to a congregation composed chiefly of seafaring men and fisherwomen, he greatly astonished his congregation by commencing the sermon with these words: "I come to preach to great sinners, notorious sinners—yea, to *Wapping* sinners."

### Whistling—a Good Temperance Agent

A certain old lady in Cheshire, whenever she hires a servant, asks him if he can whistle? On being requested, by a friend, to explain the cause of such a singular question, she replied that when her footman

went down to draw the ale, she always made him whistle until he returned, by which means she insured his sobriety.

### "Take No Thought . . . Wherewithal Ye Shall Be Clothed"

In answer to the arguments urged by Puritans, Quakers, etc., against showy decorations of the human figure, I once heard Dr. Johnson exclaim, "Oh, let us not be found, when our Master calls us, ripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues! Let us all conform in outward customs, which are of no consequence, to the manners of those whom we live among, and despise such paltry distinctions. Alas, sir!" continued he, "a man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat, will not find his way thither sooner in a gray one." [9]

### Wilberforce's Candor

In the life of Mr. Wilberforce, we find in his *Diary* the following entry: "Went to hear Mr. Foster. Felt much devotion, and—(naming a friend) went to sleep during the psalms; during the sermon, went to sleep myself." [10]

### Dr. Johnson's Advice on Matrimony

On one occasion, when he was musing over the fire in our drawing-room at Streatham, a young gentleman called to him suddenly, and I suppose he thought disrespectfully, in these words: "Mr. Johnson, would you advise me to marry?" "I would advise no man to marry, sir," returns for answer in a very angry tone Dr. Johnson, "who is not likely to propagate understanding," and so left the room. Our companion looked confounded, and scarce recovered the consciousness of his own existence, when Johnson came back, and drawing his chair among us, with altered looks and a softened voice, joined in the general chat, insensibly led the conversation to the subject of marriage, where he laid himself out in a

dissertation so useful, so elegant, so founded on the true knowledge of human life, and so adorned with beauty of sentiment, that no one ever recollects the offence, except to rejoice in its consequences. He repented just as certainly, however, if he had been led to praise any person or thing by accident more than he thought it deserved ; and was on such occasions comically earnest to destroy the praise or pleasure he had unintentionally given. [9]

### Bishop Atterbury's Pad

In the debate on the Occasional Conformity and Schism Bill in the House of Lords, in December, 1718, the promoters of the Bill were very warmly opposed by Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, who said, "He had prophesied last winter this Bill would be attempted in the present session, and he was sorry to find he had been a true prophet." Lord Coningsby, who always spoke in a passion, rose immediately after the bishop, and remarked that, "One of the right reverends had set himself forth as a prophet, but, for his part, he did not know what prophet to liken him to, unless to that famous prophet Balaam, who was reproved by his own ass." The bishop, in reply, with great wit and calmness, exposed this rude attack, concluding in these words : "Since the noble lord hath discovered in our manners such a similitude, I am well content to be compared to the prophet Balaam ; but, my lords, I am at a loss how to make out the other part of the parallel. I am sure I have been reproved by nobody but his lordship." From that day forth Lord Coningsby was called "Atterbury's Pad." [11]

### "Grace Before Meat"

The Rev. M—— J——, Congregational minister of Lewisham, had two friends who were visiting at his house one evening. The supper consisted of a pie which was not too large for four persons, though perhaps too large for such a meal as supper ought to be. In his "grace" Mr. J—— gratefully said :

"One pie between four of us,  
And thank the Lord there are no more of us." [20]

---

Archbishop Laud was a man of short stature. Charles I and the archbishop were one day about to sit down to dinner together, when it was agreed that Archer, the king's jester, should say grace for them, which he did as follows: "Great praise be given to God, but little *land* to the devil." [11]

---

One day when Dr. Johnson was speaking upon the subject, I asked him if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner? "So often," he replied, "that at last she called to me, when I was about to say grace, and said, 'Nay, hold, Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest not eatable.'" [9]

#### One for Jehu and Two for Himself

On the road to Epsom, a moustached youth, on the top of a drag, evidently ambitious of being mistaken for "an officer," thus saluted a fat coachman, who was gravely driving his master and family—"Halloa, you, sir! where's your shirt collar? How dare you come to the Derby without a shirt collar?" Jehu growled forth, without lifting his eyes from his horses—"Ow the doose could I have a shirt collar, when your mother hasn't set home my washing!"

#### No Inoculation Needed

"I believe the jury have been inoculated with stupidity," said a lawyer. "That may be," said his opponent, "but the bar are of the opinion that you were born with it."

#### The Moods and Tenses of the Money Lender

A schoolmaster, describing a money lender, says: "He serves you in the present tense, he lends you in the conditional mood, keeps you in the subjunctive, and ruins you in the future."

### "Second Childhood"

Two gentlemen were dining at a restaurant the other night. The "lamb" that they had ordered was particularly tough. Jones called the waiter. "What is this meat you have given us?" "Lamb, sir." "You are quite sure it's lamb, and *not* mutton?" "Oh, certainly, sir." "H'm! Oh, yes, I see. A case of second childhood, probably."

### A "Friendly" Attitude

A Quaker, driving in a single-horse chaise up a green lane that leads from Newington Green to Hornsey, happened to meet with a young man, who was also in a single-horse chaise. There was not room enough for them to pass each other, unless one of them would back his carriage, which they both refused.

"I'll not make way for you," says the young fellow, with an oath.

"I think I am older than thou art," said the Quaker, "and therefore have a right to expect thee to make way for me."

"I won't," resumed the first. He then pulled out a newspaper and began to read as he sat still in his chaise.

The Quaker, observing him, pulled a pipe and some tobacco from his pocket, lighted his pipe, and sat and puffed away very comfortably. "Friend," said he, "when thou hast read that paper I should be glad if thou wouldest lend it me." The young man gave up the contest.

### Holding for the Rise

A wag, passing through a country town early in the nineteenth century, observed a fellow placed in the stocks. "My friend," said he, "I advise you by all means to sell out." "I should have no objection, your honor," he replied, drily, "but at present they seem *much too low*."

### Ministerial Exchanges

At the bishop's visitation held recently at Appleby, the following dialogue was overheard between two

youngsters : *Jack* : " I say, Bill, what's the meanin' o' so mony parsons bein' here ? " *Bill* : " Wie ! they meets yance a year to change sarmons."

### Sectarian Repartee

Soon after Mr. Lucas, late M. P. for Meath, had abjured Quakerism, he was encountered by John Bright, M. P. for Manchester, who exclaimed, " Well, Friend Lucas, how dost thee like thy new superstition ? " " Why, Friend Bright," retorted Mr. Lucas, " I like it better than I did our old hypocrisy ! "

### "Moods" and "Cases" from a Schoolboy's Life

A few days ago a day scholar belonging to the grammar-school in this town was passing through the market-place with a satchel on his back. He looked longingly into a pastrycook's shop, when a gentleman came up and said to him, " I suppose, my lad, you are in the *optative mood* ? " " Yes, sir," replied the boy, " and I hope you are in the *dative case* ." The boy got a shilling for his quickness. [6]

### A Sailor's Explanation of Etiquette

As George III, King of Great Britain, was walking the quarter-deck of one of his men-of-war with his hat on, a sailor asked his messmate, " who that lubberly fellow was that did not dowse his peak to the admiral ? " " Why, it's the king," said Jack. " Well, king or no king," retorts the other, " he's an unmanly dog." " Lord, where should he learn manners ? " replied Jack, " he never was out of sight of land in his life."

### A Funny Announcement

A lady in London had an owl which, being brought into the parlor, she said, " He looks very grave, poor fellow ; he is like a judge." So she called him Lord Eldon. A day or two after, the servant came into the parlor, saying to her mistress before the company, " Please ma'am, Lord Eldon has laid an egg."

### Certain Death Either Way

One of the most ludicrous misprints to pass an editor's revision upon record, occurs in a number of the *Quarterly Review*. A writer has occasion to transcribe Dryden's celebrated portrait of a country parson, supposed to be a picture of Bishop Ken:

"A parish priest was of the pilgrim train;  
An awful, reverend, and religious man,  
Of sixty years he seemed, and well might last  
To sixty more, but that he lived to fast."

The *Quarterly Review* prints the last line—

" . . . but that he lived *too* fast."

### Saving Him From His Rashness

One evening, in the olden time, at Haddon Hall, an impudent young fellow who was, however, old enough to know better, had, by some extraordinary chance got a pretty Quakeress into a sly corner under the mistletoe, and said he should not think of parting without giving her a kiss. "Friend," said she "thee must not do it." "I'm d---d if I don't, though," said he. "Well, friend, as thee hast sworn thee may do it, but thee must not make a practice of it."

### Sin and its Size

When a violin was first introduced into the choir of a certain church, the innovation gave great offence to some of the worthy parishioners. Especially was the player of the bass viol exercised with sorrow and indignation when the frivolous and profane fiddle first took its place in the house of God by the side of his sedate and portly instrument. He accordingly laid his case before the parson; who, after listening soberly to his complaint, replied, "It may be as you say, sir. I don't know but you are right; but, if you are, it strikes me the greater the fiddle the greater the sin!"

### Afraid to Venture

Leigh Hunt was asked by a lady, at dessert, if he would venture upon an orange. "Madam, I should be happy to do so, but I am afraid I should tumble off."

### Beginning Too Early

A good tale is told of the clerk at a little village church near Taunton. At this church the service is never commenced on Sunday mornings until the "squire" has taken his seat. One Sunday, however, this gentleman happened to be late, and a neighboring clergyman, not acquainted with the ways of the place, was doing duty. So he commenced, as usual, with "When the wicked man ——" He had proceeded no further when up jumped the clerk, bawling out, "Stop, stop, sir, he's not come yet."

### A Trade Distinction, With Little Difference

A certain shopkeeper had for his virtue obtained the name of the "little rascal." A stranger asked him why this appellation had been given to him? "To distinguish me from the rest of my trade," quoth he, "who are all great rascals."

### Tight Lacing "Good" for Consumption

"Doctor, do you think tight lacing is bad for consumption?" "Not at all—it is what it lives on." The doctor's reply was wise as well as witty.

### Boasting of Treasure Before a Rothschild

It is recorded of a young fop who visited one of the Rothschilds, that he was so proud of his malachite sleeve-buttons, that he insisted upon exhibiting them to his host. The latter looked at them, and said, "Yes, it is a pretty stone; I have always liked it. I have a mantle-piece made of it in the next room!"

### A Qualifying Proposal

It is, or was, usual to designate parliamentary committees by the names of the bills which they met to consider. About sixty years ago a bill was introduced into the House of Lords for enclosing the lands in the parish of Great Snoring, in the county of Norfolk, and was in regular course committed to a select committee. It was sometimes a practice to move that on

a select committee all the Lords who attend it shall have voices ; and Lord Eldon, then Lord Chancellor, one day rose with the greatest gravity and said : " I request your Lordships' serious attention to the motion I am about to put. It is that all the Lords who attend the Great Snoring Committee shall have voices."

### "Seven," and "Eleven," at Dr. Kitchiner's

The most celebrated wits of the day graced the dinner table of the late Dr. Kitchiner, and among others the late George Colman, who was an especial favorite. His interpolation of a little monosyllable in a written admonition which the doctor caused to be placed on the mantel-piece of the dining parlor, will never be forgotten, and was the origin of such a drinking bout as was seldom permitted under his roof. The caution ran thus : " Come at seven, go at eleven." Colman briefly altered the sense of it ; for upon the doctor's attention being directed to the card, he read, to his astonishment, " Come at seven, go it at eleven ! " which the guests did, and the claret was punished accordingly.

### "Also" and "Likewise"—A "Friendly" Exposition

A counsel once of talents vain,  
A Quaker rudely treated,  
Who often in his story plain,  
The word, *also*, repeated.

"Also," said Brief, with sneering wit,  
" Won't 'likewise' do as well?"  
" No, friend ; but if thou wilt permit,  
Their difference I will tell.

"Scarlett's a counsel learn'd, we know,  
Whose talents oft surprise ;  
*Thou* art a counsel, friend, *also*,  
But surely not *like-wise*."

### An Up and Down Reply

During the examination of a witness, as to the locality of stairs in a house, the counsel asked him : " Which way the stairs ran ? " The witness, who, by the way, was a noted wag, replied that " one way they ran upstairs, but the other way they ran downstairs."

The learned counsel winked both eyes and then took a look at the ceiling.

### Wisdom which was Acquired—not Hereditary

" If I were so unlucky," said an officer, " as to have a stupid son, I would certainly, by all means, make him a parson." A clergyman who was in the company calmly replied, " You think differently, sir, from your father."

### " Commentators " Disagreeing with the Parons

A clergyman, in the course of an argumentative sermon, found it necessary to express his disagreement, upon some doctrinal point, with those who had published explanations of the passage in question ; he accordingly spoke as follows : " Commentators, for the most part do not agree with me." A farmer, in the parish, who had listened to the discourse, appeared the next morning in the clergyman's study, bringing with him a sack of portly dimensions, which he begged the rector to accept, telling him at the same time, " that he had heard him say, in his sermon, that *common taters* did not agree with him, and so he had brought him a sack of his best KIDNEYS."

### Sam Deacon's Ugly Carriage

Mr. Samuel Deacon, a most respectable Baptist minister, who resided at Barton in Leicestershire, was not peculiarly happy in his cast of countenance or general appearance. Conscious of the silly ridicule his unprepossessing exterior occasionally exerted, he made the following good-humored, quaint epigram on himself :

"The carcass that you look at so,  
Is not Sam Deacon, you must know;  
But 'tis the carriage—the machine  
Which Samuel Deacon rideth in." [ii]

### **A Retort not Understood—Perhaps**

A lover of music, having bored a friend, who called on him, with a number of sonatas and other pieces on the fiddle, observed to his friend that they were all of them extremely difficult. His friend, who had been wearied with the performance, drily replied, "I wish they had been impossible."

### **Lord Chesterfield and the Dirty Dishes**

Lord Chesterfield one day, at an inn where he dined complained very much that the plates and dishes were very dirty. The waiter, with a degree of pertness, observed, "It is said that every one must eat a peck of dirt before he dies." "That may be true," said Chesterfield, "but no one is obliged to eat it all at one meal."

### **Interesting Conundrum—for Asses and Commercial Travelers**

In the days of mail-coaches a loquacious bagman and a priest happened to travel "insides," the rest of the company consisting of two young ladies. Desirous of showing off his wit, the traveler chose the priest for his butt, and among other things proposed the question, "What is the difference between an ass and a priest?" His reverence, after some thought, gave it up. "Why," said the triumphant commercial, "the priest has a cross on his breast, whilst the ass has one on his back." "Very good," smiled the priest. "Now allow me to propose a riddle in my turn. What is the difference between a commercial traveler and an ass?" The bagman made several guesses, but at last was compelled to admit that he "did not know." "Nor I either," was the calm retort. [ii]

### **A Pennyworth of Figs**

Abernethy, while canvassing for the office of surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, called upon a

rich grocer. "I suppose, sir," said the grocer, with much importance, "you want my vote and interest at this momentous epoch of your life?" "No, I don't," said Abernethy, "I want a pennyworth of figs; come, look sharp and wrap them up, for I want to be off."

### A Pretty Retort

A lady, one day in conversation with Garrick, said, "Dear sir, I wish you were a little taller"; to which he replied, "My dear madam, how happy should I be did I stand higher in your estimation."

### Piety which is not Religious

Tom Hood, on hearing the piety of a very loquacious lady spoken of, said, "Yes, she is well-known for her mag-piety."

### A Well-timed Reply

A certain reprobate buck-parson, going to read prayers at a remote village in the west of England, found great difficulty in putting on the surplice, which was an old-fashioned one. "D——n this old surplice," said he to the clerk, "I think the d——l is in it." The astonished clerk waited till the parson had got it on, and then sarcastically answered, "I think as how he is, zir!" [ii]

### Suet or Dripping?

A gentleman called one evening to see Suett, the comedian, at the stage door of the theatre at which the actor was engaged. Suett not being in the theatre, the gentleman—to whom the actor's person was unknown—resolved to wait. Presently the actor came in, drenched with the rain, which was falling heavily.

"Pray, sir," said the gentleman, "are you Suett?" "Egad," was the reply, "I rather think I'm *dripping*."

### The Promise of the God-Parents

One of the candidates for confirmation at a bishop's visitation, on being asked by the clergyman to whom she applied for her certificate of qualification, what her

god-fathers and god-mothers promised for her, said with much *naiveté*: "I've a yeard that they promised to give me hafe a dozen zilver spoons, but I've never had 'em though."

### **An Unanswerable Argument**

"No cows, no cream," was the way a compositor set up the words, "No cross, no crown."

### **"Do You Smoke, Sir?"**

"Do you smoke, sir?" said a London sharper to a country gentleman, whom he met in a coffee-house, and with whom he wished to scrape acquaintance."

"Yes," said the other, with a cool, steady eye, "anyone who has a design upon me."

### **An Excellent Memory; or, "Remembering to do Good"**

The following anecdote will prove that Fuller's heart was as good as his memory. The reverend gentleman making a visit to the Committee of Sequestrators sitting at Waltham in Essex, they soon fell into a discourse and commendation of his great memory, to which he replied, "'Tis true, gentlemen, that fame has given me the report of a memorist, and, if you please, I will give you a specimen of it." They all accepted the proposal, and told him they should look upon it as a favor, requesting him to begin. "Gentlemen," said Fuller, "you want a specimen of my memory, and you shall have a good one. Your worships have thought it fit to sequester a poor but honest parson, who is my near neighbor, and commit him to prison. The unfortunate man has a large family of children, and as his circumstances are but indifferent, if you will have the goodness to release him out of prison, I pledge myself never to forget the kindness while I live." It is said that this jest had such an influence on the committee, that they immediately released the poor clergyman, and restored him to his benefice. [11]

**"Grandfather's Coat"**

A spendthrift, who had wasted nearly all his patrimony, seeing an acquaintance in a coat not of the newest cut, told him he thought it had been his great-grandfather's coat. "So it was," said the gentleman; "and I also have my great-grandfather's land, which is more than you can say."

**"Didn't He Want to Go to Heaven?"**

A college student was invited one Sunday to occupy the pulpit in a little country church. After what he considered a masterly effort on the subject of "Lazarus and the rich man," he called on a good old brother to pray, and was somewhat electrified to hear the following: "O Lord! we thank Thee that we are not like this poor despised beggar Lazarus, who we've just been listenin' to!"

**A Little Swearing**

A bishop being at his seat in the country, where the roads were uncommonly bad, went to pay a visit to a person of quality in the neighborhood, when his coach was overturned in a slough, whence the servants were unable to extricate it. As it was far from any house, and the weather bad, the coachman at last told his master he believed they must stay there all night. "For," said he, "while your grace is present, I cannot make the horses move." Astonished at this strange assertion, his lordship desired him to explain himself. "It is," said the man, "because I dare not swear in your presence; and if I don't, we shall never get clear." The bishop, finding nothing could be done if the servant was not humored, replied, "Well, then, swear a *little*, but not much." The coachman made use of his permission, and the horses, accustomed to this kind of language, soon set the coach at liberty. [11]

**Bunyan's Test for a False Prophet**

A Quaker called upon Bunyan in gaol one day, with what he professed to be a message from the Lord. "After searching for thee," said he, "in half the gaols

of England, I am glad to find thee at last." "If the Lord sent thee," said Bunyan, sarcastically, "you would not have needed to take so much trouble to find me out, for He knows that I have been in Bedford gaol these seven years past." [12]

### **He Didn't Know Everything**

Mr. Hissey relates an experience on the road which had its comical aspect, aside from its provoking incivility. He came upon two men filling a well with water from casks in a cart. As it struck him that this "carrying coals to Newcastle" was a curious sort of proceeding, he pulled up to make inquiries as to the object of doing this. The well appeared to be an old one, and the weather had not of late been particularly dry, so we were naturally surprised at the rare sight.

"Anything the matter with the well?" we exclaimed. "We always thought that water was got from wells, not put into them."

To which we received the somewhat curt reply: "Perhaps you comes from London town?"

We acknowledged the fact.

"Ah, I thought so! You Londoners are very clever fellows—thinks as how you knows everything. Now you sees you don't."

### **An Apt Scripture Quotation**

"Did I not give you a flogging the other day?" said a schoolmaster to a trembling boy.

"Yes, sir," answered the boy.

"Well, what do the Scriptures say upon the subject?"

"I don't know, sir," said the boy; "except it is, 'It's more blessed to give than to receive.'"

### **The King, Lord Chesterfield and—The Devil**

Soon after Lord Chesterfield came into the Privy Council, a place of great trust happened to become vacant, to which his majesty (George II) and the Duke of Dorset recommended two different persons.

The king espoused the interest of his friend with some heat, but not being able to carry his point, left the council-chamber in great displeasure. As soon as he retired, the matter was warmly debated, but at length carried against the king. However, in the humor the king then was, a question arose as to who should carry the grant of the office for the royal signature, and the lot fell upon Chesterfield. His lordship found his sovereign in a very unfavorable mood ; he therefore prudently forbore incensing him by an abrupt request, and instead of bluntly asking him to sign the instrument, very submissively requested to know whose name his majesty would have inserted to fill up the blanks. The king answered in a passion, "The devil's, if you will." "Very well," replied the earl ; "but would your majesty have the instrument run in the usual style—'Our trusty and well-beloved cousin and counselor'?" The monarch laughed, and signed the paper.

#### Graceful Criticism

The celebrated Dr. Balguy, author of the work on "Divine Benevolence," after having delivered an exceedingly good discourse at Winchester Cathedral, the text of which was, "All wisdom is sorrow," received the following elegant compliment from Dr. Watson, then at Winchester School :

"If what you advance, dear doctor, be true,  
That 'wisdom is sorrow,' how wretched are you!" [ii]

#### Clergymen and Corkscrews

The Earl of Sandwich, known by the name of "Jemmy Twitcher," who was noted for making pretty free with the clerical cloth, being in a large company where there were ten clergymen present, secretly offered a considerable bet to the gentleman who sat next him, that there was not a single prayer-book in the pocket of any of the parsons. The wager being accepted, a pretended dispute respecting some article in the church service gave occasion to an inquiry for a prayer-book, but none of the clergymen could pro-

duce one. A little later, the earl privately offered another bet to the same amount, that there was not among the ten parsons a single one of them without a corkscrew. This wager was accepted; and the butler, being properly instructed, presently entered the room with a bottle of claret and a broken corkscrew, requesting the favor of any gentleman who had such a thing, to lend it to him, when, in an instant, each of the ten parsons pulled a corkscrew out of his pocket. [11]

### **Pitt and Possible Invasion**

The following anecdote is recorded in Lord Stanhope's "Life of Pitt": A pleasantry of Pitt has been preserved by tradition. It seems that one battalion of volunteers which he was forming, or in the formation of which he was consulted, did not show the same readiness as that displayed by the rest. Their draft rules, which they sent to Pitt, were full of cautions and reserves. The words "except in the case of actual invasion," were constantly occurring. At length came a clause that at no time, and on no account whatever, were they to be sent out of the country. Pitt here lost patience, and, taking up his pen, he wrote opposite to that clause in the draft the same words as he had read in the preceding, "Except in the case of actual invasion." [13]

### **The Lady and the Play**

A lady who had written a play sent it to a manager of a theatre with a very civil message, offering it to him for nothing. He observed, "She knew the exact value of it."

### **"Lapsus Linguæ," or the Dangers of Imitation**

A gentleman's servant bringing into the dining-room (where a dinner party was assembled) a boiled tongue, tripped on the floor, and caused the tongue to roll off the dish. The master of the house, not the least affected by the accident, soon removed the embarrassment of his guests, as well as of the servant, by saying, with much good humor, "There's no

harm done, gentlemen ; it is merely a *lapsus linguae*." This fortunate *jeu-de-mot* excited much merriment.

A gentleman present, struck with the happy effect of this stroke of wit was determined to let off the joke himself. He invited a large party, and when they were all assembled he directed his servant to let a piece of roast beef fall on the floor. "Never mind," cried the host, "it is only a *lapsus linguae*."

### "Saving" the Dinner

The dinner daily prepared for the royal chaplains at St. James' was reprieved for a time from suspension by an effort of wit. King Charles II had appointed a day for dining with his chaplains, before an end should be put to those dinners. It was Dr. South's turn to say grace, and whenever the king thus honored his chaplains the prescribed formula ran thus : "God save the king, and bless the dinner." Our witty divine took the liberty of transposing the words by saying, "God bless the king, and save the dinner." "It shall be saved," said the king, and he kept his word. [11]

### Ill-constructed Sentences

The following are whimsical instances of erroneous construction of sentences : In the narrative of an incident some time since, it was stated that "a poor old woman was run over by a cart aged sixty." So, in a case of supposed poisoning, a witness said : "He had something in a blue paper in his hand, and I saw him put his head over the pot and put it in!" Another, swallowing a base coin : "He snatched the half-crown from the boy, which he swallowed." An old fellow, who had for many years sold combustible matches in London, had the following cry : "Buy a pennyworth of matches of a poor old man, made of foreign wood!"

### Sydney Smith and His Portrait

It is recorded of Sydney Smith that he was once asked by Landseer, the celebrated animal painter, to sit for his portrait. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?" was the reply of the witty divine.

### Royal Precedence

One day, at the table of George IV, when Prince Regent, the royal host, said, "Why, Colman, you are older than I am!" "Oh, no, sir," replied Colman, "I could not take the liberty of coming into the world before your royal highness!"

### Charles Kean and His Critic

During one of Charles Kean's visits to the United States he was entertained at dinner by one of the great New York merchants. Opposite to him at table there sat a gentleman who continued to observe him with marked attention, and at last called on the host to present him to Mr. Kean. The introduction was duly made and ratified by drinking wine together; when the stranger, with much impressiveness of manner, said: "I saw you in *Richard* last night." Kean, feeling, not unnaturally, that a compliment was approaching, smiled blandly and bowed. "Yes, sir," continued the other, in a slow, almost judicial tone, "I have seen your father in *Richard*; and I saw the last Mr. Cooke"; another pause, in which Charles Kean's triumph was gradually mounting higher and higher. "Yes, sir, Cooke, sir, was better than your father; and your father, sir, was a long way better than you!"

### The Paley Family Arms

"When I set up a carriage," said Dr. Paley, "it was thought right that my armorial bearings should appear on the panels. Now, we had none of us ever heard of the Paley arms; none of us had ever dreamt that such a thing existed, or had ever been. All the old folks of the family were consulted; they knew nothing about it. Great search was made, however, and at last we found a silver tankard on which was engraved a coat of arms. It was carried by common consent that these *must* be the family arms, so they were painted on the carriage and looked very handsome. The carriage went on very well with them, and it was not till six months afterwards that we found out that the tankard had been bought at a sale." [11]

### New Thoughts on an Old Text

A young chaplain of Lord Mulgrave's had preached a sermon of great length before his lordship. "Sir," said Lord Mulgrave, bowing to him, "there was something in your sermon of to-day I never heard before." "Oh, my lord," said the flattered chaplain, "it is a common text, and I could not have hoped to have said anything new on the subject. What did you hear for the first time?" "I heard the clock strike twice," said Lord Mulgrave.

### Shaking Hands at a Duel

At a duel the combatants discharged their pistols without effect, whereupon one of the seconds interfered and proposed that the duelists should shake hands. To this the other second objected as unnecessary. "Their hands," said he, "have been shaking this half hour."

### Sydney Smith and "A Meeting of the Clergy"

It is related of Sydney Smith that once on entering a drawing-room in a West End mansion, he found it lined with mirrors on all sides. Finding himself reflected in every direction, he said that he "supposed he was at a meeting of the clergy, and there seemed to be a very respectable attendance."

### "Going By" the "Regulator Coach"

A gentleman was one day, in the old coaching times, traveling by a coach which moved at a very slow pace. "Pray," said he to the guard, "what is the name of this coach?" "The Regulator," was the reply. "And a very appropriate name, too," said the traveler, "for I see all the other coaches go *by* it."

### Bishop Law's Rebuke of an Indolent Clergyman

One of the parishes of the county of Somerset failing to be as closely attended by its spiritual shepherd as was his duty, one Sunday morning a gentleman rode up to the church door, and not finding it open,

inquired for the clerk or sexton, to which he put the question whether there would be any service that morning "Why, now, zur," said John, "I don't think there wool. We mus'n' expect measter here to-day!" "Well, never mind him," said the inquirer, "go and ring the bell; I am come to do this day's service." John's dutiful instinct being sufficiently alive to the command, without the ceremony of first learning the name and quality of his interlocutor, the grateful bells were gladly heard, and soon the parishioners flocked to the church. The stranger proceeded with the service, and delivered a discourse that fully convinced his admiring hearers that there was no lack of reverend qualifications for his office. Upon his departure, the preacher left a record in the vestry-book, under the proper date, to this effect: "Divine service was performed here this day by the Bishop of Bath and Wells." The preacher was no other but Dr. Law, the bishop of the diocese. [11]

#### **"No Effects" Without Causes**

"So poor —, the barrister, is dead," said a judge in the *nisi prius* court. "and I hear, poor fellow, that he left but very few *effects*." "Not likely that he could leave many," said Lyndhurst, with a knowing look, "when he had so few *causes*."

#### **The Puritan and the Young Lady's Curls**

A Puritan preacher rebuked a young girl, who had just been making her hair into ringlets. "Ah," said he, "had God intended your locks to be curled, He would have curled them for you." "When I was an infant," replied the damsel, "He did; but now I am grown up, He thinks I am able to do it myself."

#### **Any Change Must be an Improvement**

"How are you this morning?" said Fawcett, the comedian, to George Frederick Cooke. "Not at all myself," replied the tragedian. "Then I congratulate you," replied Fawcett, "for, be whoever else you will, you will be a gainer by the bargain."

**Dean Sherlock's "Reasons"**

Dr. William Sherlock, Dean of St. Paul's and master of the Temple, at the Revolution of 1688 was greatly embarrassed how to act. The government gave him time for consideration, and, overruled by his wife's entreaties, he took the oaths. A little while after, a wag seeing him handing her along St. Paul's churchyard (it was customary at that time to lead a lady by the hand, not to give her the arm), said: "There goes Dr. Sherlock, with his reasons for taking the oaths at his finger's ends." [11]

**Scarcity and High Prices**

George I, on a journey to Hanover, stopped at a village in Holland, and while horses were getting ready for him, he asked for two or three eggs, which were brought him, and charged a hundred florins. "How is this?" said the king, "eggs must be very scarce here." "Pardon me," said the host, "eggs are plentiful enough, but kings are scarce."

**An Englishman's Remark on a Scotchman's Tenacity**

On one occasion, during a debate in the House of Commons, one of the members of the House was inquiring for a representative of a Scotch county, and was informed that he had left his place. "I never before," said the M. P., "knew a Scotchman quit his place." "Except," added a friend near him, "except his native place."

**A Keen Thrust**

King Charles II possessed the reputation of being skilled in naval architecture. Being once at Chatham to view a ship which had just been completed, he asked the famous Killigrew "If he did not think he should make an excellent shipwright!" Killigrew replied that "he always thought his majesty would have done better at any trade than his own!"

### Humbug Defined

A woman was being examined at the Old Bailey as a witness, when to a question put by the barrister, Clarkson, she replied, "Don't think to humbug me." Upon which the recorder said, "Answer the question directly, woman, or I will commit you." "Ay," said Clarkson, "and tell us what you mean by humbug?" "Why," replied the woman, "if I was to tell you, Mr. Clarkson, that the recorder was a gentleman, that would be humbugging you, and the court, too."

### A Bishop on Squinting

Dr. John Thomas, who died Bishop of Salisbury in 1766, was a man of humor and drollery, and with a terrible obliquity in his visual rays. One day he was entertaining the company with a humorous account of some man. In the midst of his story he stopped short and said, "The fellow squinted most hideously"; and then looking around and squinting in every variety of ugliness, he added, "And I hate your squinting fellows."

### A Musical Wedding

John Palmer, the actor, appeared one day at rehearsal in great agitation. Jack Bannister requested to know what was the matter. "Why, sir, my donkey of a brother was married yesterday to a penniless girl by the name of Sharp." "My dear friend," said Bannister, "don't fret; it was a musical wedding—there was a flat and a sharp."

### Easily Altered

Charles II, playing tennis with a dignified prebend, who had struck the ball well, exclaimed: "Not a bad stroke for a *dean!*!" "I'd give it the stroke of a *bishop,*" said Mr. Dean, "if your majesty pleases." [11]

### "Filing a Bill"

A solicitor who had a remarkably long and pointed nose, once told a lady, that if she did not immediately settle a matter which he had in hand against her, he would file a bill against her. "Indeed, sir," said the

lady, "you need not *file* your *bill*, for I am sure it is sharp enough already."

### Bonner's Humor Respecting the Loss of His Own Head

When Henry VIII proposed to send Bishop Bonner to France, in a diplomatic capacity, the king told him that he must speak to the French monarch in a very lofty tone, at the same time instructing him what to say. "Please your majesty," quoth the bishop, "if I should hold such haughty language, King Francis, in all probability, would order my head to be chopped off." "If he dared to do such a thing," cried Henry, "I would chop off the heads of ten thousand Frenchmen for it." "Truly, your majesty," objected Bonner, "but, perhaps, not one of those heads would fit my shoulders." [11]

### A True Bishop

Dr. Hough, Bishop of Winchester, was remarkable for sweetness of temper, as well as every other Christian virtue, of which the following story affords a proof:—A young gentleman whose family had been well acquainted with the bishop, in making the tour of England before he went abroad, called to pay his respects to his lordship as he passed by his seat in the country. It happened to be dinner time, and the room full of company. The bishop, however, received him with much familiarity; but the servant in reaching him a chair threw down a curious weather-glass, that had cost twenty guineas, and broke it. The gentleman was under infinite concern, and began to make an apology for being himself the occasion of the accident, when the bishop, with great good humor, interrupted him. "Be under no concern, sir," said his lordship, smiling, "as I am much beholden to you for it. We have had a very dry season, and now I hope we shall have rain. I never saw the glass so *low* in my life." Every one was pleased with the humor and pleasantry of the turn, and more so, as his lordship was then more than eighty, a time of life when the infirmities of old age make most men peevish and hasty. [11]

### An Inspiring Hearer

"Well, Jackson," said a minister, walking home-wards after service with an industrious laborer, who was a constant attendant at church—"Well, Jackson, Sunday must be a blessed day of rest to you, who work so hard all the week! And you make good use of the day; for you are always to be seen at church!" "Ay, sir," replied the rustic, "it be indeed a blessed day; I works hard enough all the week, and when I comes to church o' Sundays, I sets me down, and tucks my legs up, and *thinks o' nothing.*"

### The Size of Meanness

Robert Hall once said of a member of his congregation, that he had such a little soul that it could not only be put into a nut shell, but that, if there were a maggot hole in the shell, it could creep out.

### "A Stranger, and Ye Took Me In"

Quin, when he first went to Bath, was charged exorbitantly for everything; and at the end of a week complained to Beau Nash, who had invited him thither as the cheapest place in England for a man of taste and a *bon-vivant*. Beau Nash replied, "They have acted by you on really Christian principles." "How so?" said Quin. "Why," resumed Nash, "you were a stranger, and they took you in." "Ay," rejoined Quin, "but they have fleeced me instead of clothing me!"

### Curious Provision in a Will

Madame Creswell, a notoriously bad character of King Charles II's reign, died a prisoner in Bridewell. She desired by will to have a sermon preached at her funeral, for which the preacher was to have £10; but upon this express condition, that he was to say nothing but what was *well* of her. After a sermon on the general subject of mortality the preacher concluded with saying, "By the will of a deceased sister, it is expected that I should mention her, and say

nothing but what was *well* of her. All that I shall say, therefore, of her is this: She was born *well*, she lived *well*, and she died *well*; for she was born with the name of Creswell, she lived in Clerkenwell, and she died in Bridewell." [11]

### A Bid at an Auction

Charles Bannister, going home one evening, dropped into a room where an evening auction was going on. The auctioneer was just about to knock off a lot as Bannister entered the room. "Going," said the auctioneer, raising his hammer. "Going; will no one bid any more?" "I will bid more," said Bannister. "What will you bid?" said the auctioneer. "I will bid you good-night!" was the reply, as the wit walked away.

### "Almost Persuaded" to "Make a Christian of Him"

Dr. Buckner, Bishop of Chichester, had a footman living with him at one time, whose cognomen was David, but who, upon investigation, it appeared, had never been baptized. To have the man made a Christian, the bishop felt was his imperative duty; and for this purpose his curate, the Rev. Mr. Croker, was requested to attend him at his residence in Wigmore Street, to perform the ceremony, whilst the prelate and his niece were to be the sponsors. After tea a basin of water was brought in, and David made his appearance. Mr. Croker and the lady exchanged glances, and at length were unable to repress their laughter; however, they took their places at the temporary font; but as the bishop perceived that the ceremony was not likely to be very impressive, he wisely deferred the christening till a more favorable opportunity, and left David to his fate. [11]

[Would not the bishop have been more consistent if he had "made Christians" of the curate and the lady by baptizing them first?—ED.]

### A Possible Explanation of Changed Opinions

The Bishop of Norwich, being at Malvern in 1761, met with an old fellow who was reported to be a deist. This gentleman thought proper to touch some points of religion to his lordship, who, not choosing to enter far into the subject with him, said : "When I think a man much in the wrong in an opinion, I may pity him, but I can never be angry with him for differing from me. I never knew a man change his opinion for being *kicked down stairs.*" "Very true, my lord," replied the other, "but I have known many a man do it for being *kicked up stairs.*" [11]

### Wordsworth's Mind

Mr. Buckle used to relate an amusing joke referring to Charles Lamb and Wordsworth. Wordsworth on one occasion told Lamb that Shakespeare was much overrated, and expressed an opinion that he could, if he had a mind, write as well as Shakespeare, "But you see," said Lamb, "he had not the *mind.*" [19]

### A Witty Decision

The Duke of Dorset, John Dryden, Bolingbroke, and Chesterfield were in the habit of spending their evenings together; 'twas in general, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul"; on one occasion, however, *ennui* had taken possession of the whole; at last it was proposed that the three aristocrats should each write a something, and place it under the candlestick, and that Dryden (who was at that period in very indifferent circumstances) should determine who had written the *best* thing. It was no sooner proposed than agreed to; the scrutiny commenced, judgment was given: "My lords," said Dryden, addressing Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, "you each of you have proved your wit, but I am sure you will, nevertheless, agree with me, that his grace the Duke of Dorset has excelled; pray attend my lords,—'I promise to pay John Dryden, Esq., on demand, one hundred pounds —Dorset.'" It scarcely need be observed, that the noble wits subscribed to the judgment.

**At One Time Wise—At Another, Otherwise**

The Rev. Mr. Alcock, in the middle of the last century, was rector of Burnsall, near Skipton, in Yorkshire; he was a learned man and a wit, but so much addicted to waggery that he sometimes forgot his office, and indulged in sensible eccentricities, and at others in sallies rather unbecoming a minister, though nevertheless he was a sincere Christian. An example of each is here given :

On one occasion when in the pulpit, he found that he had forgotten his sermon ; nowise confused at the loss, he called out to his clerk : " Jonas, I have left my sermon at home, so hand us up that Bible, and I'll read them a chapter in Job worth ten of it."

On another occasion, one of Mr. Alcock's friends, at whose house he was in the habit of calling previously to his entering the church on Sundays, once took occasion to unstitch his sermon and misplace the leaves. At the church, Mr. Alcock, when he had read a page, discovered the joke. " Will," said he, " thou rascal ! what's thou been doing with my sermon ? " Then turning to his congregation he said, " Brethren, Will Thornton's been misplacing the leaves of my sermon ; I have not time to put them right ; I shall read on as I find it, and you must make the best of it that you can " ; and he accordingly read through the confused mass, to the utter astonishment of his flock. [11]

**Defying and Abusing the Magistrates**

An old lady was recently brought as a witness before a bench of magistrates, and when asked to take off her bonnet, obstinately refused to do so, saying : " There is no law compelling a woman to take off her bonnet."

" Oh," imprudently replied one of the magistrates, " you know the law, do you ? Perhaps you would like to come up and sit here and teach us ? "

" No, I thank you, sir," said the woman, tartly ; " there are old women enough there now."

### A Materialistic Nobleman

On the occasion of the distribution of medals to officers and men who had served in the Crimea, Lord Malmesbury tells us that Mrs. Norton, talking about it to Lord Panmure, asked: "Was the Queen touched?"

"Bless my soul, no!" was the reply. "She had a brass railing before her, and no one could touch her."

Mrs. Norton then said, "I mean, was she moved?"

"Moved!" answered Lord Panmure; "she had no occasion to move."

Mrs. Norton then gave it up in despair. [21]

### A Procrastinating Wit

The Rev. Dr. Howard, clerical wit, was chaplain to Princess Augusta, Princess-dowager of Wales, and mother of George III. He was also rector of St. George's, Southwark. Delighting much in the good things of this world, he so far indulged his hunger and thirst after delicacies, that he found himself much in arrears to many of his trading parishioners. Fortunately for himself, he lived within the rules of the King's Bench, which shielded him from the rude intrusion of clamorous creditors. The doctor, however, was a man of humor, and frequently hit upon expedients to keep them in good temper. He once preached a sermon from the following text: "Have patience, and I will pay you all." He expatiated at great length on the virtue and advantage of *patience*. "And now, my brethren," said he, "I am come to the second part of my discourse, which is, 'And I will pay you all'; *but that I shall defer to a future opportunity.*" [11]

On another occasion, when collecting a brief with the parish officers of St. George's, he called on a grocer with whom he had a running account. As he was always in arrear with his tradespeople, the reverend gentleman, to prevent being first asked for a settlement, inquired if he was not some trifle in the

grocer's debt. On reference to the ledger there appeared a balance of seventeen shillings in favor of the shopkeeper. The doctor had recourse to his pocket and pulled out some halfpence, a little silver and a guinea. The grocer, eyeing the latter with a degree of surprise, exclaimed : "Good heavens, sir, you have a *stranger* there!" "Indeed, I have, Mr. Brown," replied the wit, returning the guinea into his pocket, "*and before we part we shall be better acquainted.*" [11]

### Curious Sermons on "What a Good Wife Should Be"

In a wedding sermon entitled "The Rib Restored," delivered in St. Dionis Back Church, in Fenchurch Street, in 1655, by Richard Meggot, afterwards Dean of Salisbury, the preacher, speaking of a good wife, says : "A help she must be in her family, being not only a wife, but a house-wife ; not a field-wife, like Dinah ; nor a street-wife like Thamar ; nor a window-wife, like Jezebel, but an house-wife."

---

Another preacher enumerated the qualifications of a good wife in the following antithesis of "To be, or not to be." She should be like three things, and yet she should not be like those three things. First, she should be like a snail, always keep within her own house ; but she should not be like a snail and carry all she has upon her back. Secondly, she should be like an echo, to speak when she is spoken to ; but she should not be like an echo, always to have the last word. Thirdly, she should be like a town-clock, always keep time and regularity ; but she should not be like a town-clock to speak so loud that all the town may hear her. [11]

### Every Man to His Calling

On a trial at the Admiralty sessions for shooting a seaman, the counsel for the crown asked one of the witnesses which he was for, plaintiff or defendant.

"Plaintiff or defendant?" says the sailor, scratching his head; "why, I don't know what you mean by 'plaintiff or defendant.' I come to speak for that man there!"

"You are a pretty fellow for a witness," says the counsel, "not to know what 'plaintiff or defendant' means."

Some time after, being asked by the same counsel what part of the ship he was in at the time—"Abaft the binnacle!" said the sailor. "Abaft the binnacle!" replied the barrister, "what part of the ship is that?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the sailor; "an't you a pretty fellow for a counselor," pointing archly at him with his finger, "not to know what 'abaft the binnacle' is!"

### Solomon's System of Self-Defence

"Do you think it would be wrong of me to learn the 'Noble Art of Self-defence?'" a religiously-inclined youth inquired of his pastor.

"Certainly not," answered the minister. "I learned it in youth myself, and I have found it of great value during my life."

"Indeed, sir! Did you learn the old English system or Sullivan's system?"

"Neither. I learned Solomon's system," replied the minister.

"Solomon's system?"

"Yes. You will find it laid down in the first verse of the fifteenth chapter of Proverbs: 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.' It is the best system of self-defence of which I have any knowledge."

### Playing the Wrong Organ

The organ-blower in a London church one day fell asleep during service, of which fact the audience soon became conscious by the vigorous blowing of his own organ. The preacher, after bearing it for a while, stopped and remarked:

"I do not object to a quiet nap on a hot day, and am flattered at being able to contribute to anybody's

repose. But, while proud at being able to give the beloved sleep, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I draw the line at snores. There is a man snoring in the congregation, and I shall be obliged if some one will awaken him."

The offender was quickly aroused.

### Fearful of Contagion

One day when Bishop Thomas was still curate of one of the churches in Thames Street, he was burying a corpse, and a woman came and pulled him by the sleeve, in the midst of the service. "Sir, sir, I want to speak to you." "Pr'ythee," said he, "woman, wait till I have done." "No, sir, I must speak to you immediately." "Why, then, what is the matter?" "Why, sir," says she, "you are burying a man who died of the small-pox next my poor husband who never had it." This anecdote was related by Dr. Thomas himself. [11]

### His Birthday Party

*Boy*: "Ain't it time to eat the good things?"

*Mother*: "Certainly not. You must wait until your friends come."

*Boy*: "I guess they won't come, 'cause I didn't invite them. I thought I'd rather have it entirely exclusive."

### Offering a Premium on Theft

A clergyman in the West, who had unfortunately quarreled with his parishioners, had the misfortune to have some linen stolen from the lines on which it hung to dry, and he posted hand-bills for the discovery of the offender. Next morning, the following was written at the foot of the copy posted against the church door:

"Some thief has stolen the parson's shirts,  
To skin naught could be nearer;  
The parish 'll give five hundred pounds  
To him that steals the wearer." [11]

### Palmerston's Humor in His Last Illness

Lord Palmerston's good humor, as a distinct element of his character is well known. We find it even during his last illness, when his physician was forced to mention death. "Die, my dear doctor!" he exclaimed, "that's the last thing I shall do."

### Hood's Humor in His Last Illness

In Hood's last illness, when he was wasted to a shadow, a mustard poultice was to be applied to his chest. "Ah, doctor," said the poor patient, smiling faintly, "it is a great deal of mustard to so little meat."

### Dr. Donne "Undone," but not "Done Up"

Dr. Donne, the celebrated Dean of St. Paul's, whose curious monument is still preserved in the crypt, having married Sir George More's daughter without the consent of her parents, was imprisoned in the Fleet Prison, and otherwise treated with severity. Donne, however, wrote a very eloquent and submissive letter to the offended father-in-law, which was signed; "John Donne, Ann Donne, *undone*." This quibble is said to have been the means of restoring the distressed couple to the parental favor. [11]

### Education

In talking of the education of children, I asked Johnson what he thought was best to teach them first. Johnson replied: "Sir, it is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first, but in the meantime your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both." [22]

### An Insignificant M. P.

A couple of visitors from a rural district were in the Strangers' Gallery, in the House of Commons, trying to pick out members on the floor.

"I can't distinguish him," said one after a hopeless visual observation.

"Of course not," was the honest reply; "he can't even distinguish himself."

### A Church Living in the Nineteenth Century

In 1832 the vicarage of Wyburn or Winsburn, in Cumberland, was of the following tempting value. Fifty shillings per annum, a new surplice, a pair of clogs, and feed on the common for one goose. This favored church preferment was then in the midst of a wild country inhabited by shepherds. The clerk kept a pot house opposite the church. The service was once a fortnight, and when there was no congregation, the vicar and Moses used to regale themselves at the bar. [11]

### A Study in Natural History

*Professor (lecturing upon the rhinoceros):* "I must beg you to give me your undivided attention. It is absolutely impossible that you can form a true idea of this hideous animal unless you keep your eyes fixed on me."

### "Dealing" and "Leading"

Sir Frederick Thesiger (afterwards Lord Chelmsford) once had occasion to object to the irregularity of a learned sergeant, who, in examining his witnesses, repeatedly put leading questions.

"I have a right," maintained the sergeant, doggedly, "to deal with my witnesses as I please."

"To that I offer no objection," retorted Sir Frederick; "you may *deal* as you like, but you shan't *lead*."

### Curious Misconceptions at a Funeral

A ludicrous mistake happened some time ago at a funeral. The clergyman was reading the service, until he came to that part which says, "our deceased brother or sister," without knowing whether the deceased was a male or a female. He turned round to one of the mourners, and asked whether it was a brother or a sister. The man very innocently replied, "No relation at all, sir; only an acquaintance." [11]

### Henry Russell's Singing

An interesting account of the author of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," has recently appeared in the *World*, from which we make the following extract :

"On one occasion I was invited to Hanley to give a benefit entertainment for the Staffordshire potters, who were in much distress. After I had sung my song, 'There's a Good Time Coming, Boys; Wait a Little Longer,' a man in the crowd rose excitedly and shouted : 'Muster Russell, can ye fix the toime ?'

"Another artisan in the reserved seats stood up and quietly said : 'Shut oop, man ; Muster Russell'll write to ye !'

"At Newcastle-on-Tyne I gave the 'Gambler's Wife.' I may tell you that the wife is awaiting the gambler's return. The clock strikes one, the clock strikes two, and then the clock strikes three. As the clock strikes four, the young wife, clasping her child to her bosom, dies in hopeless despair. A woman stood up in the audience and emphatically declaimed in a shrill shriek : 'Oh, Mr. Russell, if it had been me, wouldn't I have fetched him home !'"

In earlier days, as Henry Russell was singing, "Woodman, Spare that Tree," an old gentleman cried : "Mr. Russell, was the tree saved?"

"It was, sir."

"Thank God for that!" he answered, with a sigh of relief.

The realistic character of Mr. Russell's songs, and the impression of actuality which they gave to the minds of the people, is shown in another anecdote :

On the "Newfoundland Dog" being sung, a piece which described the dog saving a child's life, a North countryman exclaimed : "Was the child saved, man?"

"It was, sir."

With the anxious look of one asking a great favor, the man pleaded : "Could ye get me a peep?"

### At Home Everywhere but at Home

"Ah, old fellow," said a gentleman, meeting another in the street. "so you are married at last?

Allow me to congratulate you, for I hear you have an excellent and accomplished wife."

"I have, indeed," was the reply. "She is so! Accomplished! Why, sir, she is perfectly at home in literature, at home in music, at home in art, at home in science—in short, at home everywhere except—"

"Except what?"

"Except at home."

## A Cock that Couldn't Crow

On one occasion when G. F. Cooke, the famous actor, was playing his celebrated character of *Richard the Third*, the person enacting Ratcliff was very imperfect in his part. Coming on the stage, in the fifth act of the play, in which King Richard, just as he concludes his well-known soliloquy in the tent-scene, inquires "Who's there?" the personator of Ratcliff, on the occasion in question, got as far in his speech in reply as "'Tis I—the early village cock"—and he could proceed no further. After a short pause, Cooke, with a humorous twinkle of his eye, said, "Why the deuce don't you crow, then?"

## Scholastic Wit

Dr. John Jegon, of Bennett's College, Cambridge, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was a most serious man and a grave governor; yet withal of a most facetious disposition. The following is an instance: While master of the college, he chanced to punish all the undergraduates for some general offence, and the penalty was put on their heads in the buttery. He disdained, however, to apply the money to his own use, and it was expended in white-washing the hall of the college; whereupon a scholar hung up these lines on the screen:

"Doctor Jegon, Bennett's College master;  
Broke the scholars' heads, and gave the walls a  
plaster."

The doctor, whose ready wit was not the least impaired by age, on reading the paper, wrote under it in pencil the following extempore:

"Knew I the wag that writ these lines in bravery,  
I'd commend him for his wit, but whip him for  
knavery." [11]

### **Local Sympathy**

A melting Good Friday sermon being preached in a country church, all wept except one man, who being asked why he did not weep as well as the rest? "Oh!" replied he, "I belong to another parish." [11]

### **Ante-Reformation Days**

The term "Protestantism" reminds us of the prompt answer which was given by Wilks, who, being asked by a Romanist, "Where was your church before Luther?" replied, "Where was your face before you washed it this morning?" [11]

### **A Good Judge of Sermons**

The late Bishop Blomfield used to tell a story of his having once, late in life, preached at the University Church at Cambridge, and of having seen a verger there whom he remembered when he was himself an undergraduate. The bishop told the verger he was glad to see him looking so well at such a great age. "Oh, yes, my lord," said the man, "I have much to be grateful for. I have heard every sermon that has been preached in this church for fifty years, and, thank God, I am a Christian still." [11]

### **The Ship Chaplain's Sermon on Heaven**

In a storm at sea the chaplain asked one of the crew if he thought there was any danger. "Why," replied the sailor, "if this continues, we shall all be in heaven before to-morrow morning." The chaplain, horrified at these words, cried out, "The Lord forbid!" [11]

### **"The Tongue can No Man Tame"**

Once at a meeting of ministers a question was started to be debated among them. Upon the first proposal of it, a confident young divine said: "Truly, I hold it so." "You hold, sir?" replied the Rev. Philip Henry; "it becomes you to hold your tongue." [11]

**The Quickest Courtship and Marriage on Record**

Jeremy White, one of Oliver Cromwell's domestic chaplains, paid his addresses to Lady Frances, the Protector's youngest daughter. Oliver was told of it by a spy, who followed the intrigue so closely that he tracked Jerry to the lady's chamber, and ran immediately to the Protector with this news. Oliver, in a rage, hastened thither himself, and entering unexpectedly, found the chaplain on his knees kissing the lady's hand. In a towering passion he asked him what was the meaning of his being in that posture before his daughter?

White replied, " May it please your highness, I have a long time courted that young gentlewoman there, my lady's woman, and I cannot prevail. I was, therefore, humbly praying her ladyship to intercede for me."

The Protector, turning to the young woman, exclaimed : " What's the meaning of this, hussey ? Why do you refuse the honor Mr. White would do you ? He is my good friend, and I expect you to treat him as such."

My lady's woman, who desired nothing more, with a very low courtsy, replied : " If Mr. White intends me that honor, I shall not be against him."

" Say you so, my lass ?" exclaimed Cromwell. " Call Godwyn ! This business shall be done presently —before I go out of the room."

White had gone too far to retreat. The parson came, and Jerry and my lady's woman were made one flesh in the presence of the Protector. [11]

**Johnson and Mr. Crawford—An Extinguisher**

Mr. Crawford being engaged to dinner where Dr. Johnson was to be, resolved to pay his court to him ; and having heard that he preferred Donne's Satires to Pope's version of them, said, " Do you know, Dr. Johnson, that I like Dr. Donne's original Satires better than Pope's ?" Johnson said, " Well, sir, I can't help that." [24]

### Hats Blocked while You "Wait"!

A thief went into the hall of a Brighton hotel and gathered up all the hats. He was making his way out, when a visitor came in and asked him what he was about. "Oh," says the thief, "I'm taking the gentlemen's hats round the corner to get them blocked." "Well," replied the visitor, "take my hat, too." "Certainly, sir," said the accommodating thief, and vanished.

### Twelve Pennyworths for One Shilling

In days of yore there lived in Chester an old tradesman who kept a drapery shop, and was remarkable for his imperturbable disposition, so much so that no one had ever seen him out of temper. This remarkable characteristic having become the subject of conversation, one of his neighbors, who was somewhat of a wag, bet five pounds that he could succeed in ruffling the habitual placidity of the stoic. He accordingly proceeded to his shop, and asked to see some cloths suitable for a coat. One piece was shown to him, and then another; and a third and a fourth were handed from the shelves; *this* was too coarse, *the other* too fine; one was too dark a color, another too light. Still the old draper continued placid as new milk; and no sooner did his customer start an objection to any particular piece than he was met by some other variety being laid before him, until the very last piece in the shop was unfolded to his view. The vendor now lost all hope of pleasing his fastidious purchaser, when the latter, affecting to look at the uppermost piece with satisfaction, exclaimed, "Ah, my dear sir, you have hit it at last; *this* is the very thing; I will take a *shilling's* worth of this pattern," at the same time laying the money plump on the counter before him to show that he was a prompt payer. "You shall have it, my good friend," replied the draper, with the utmost seriousness of speech and manners; and then, laying the shilling on the surface of the cloth, and applying his ample scissors, he cut it fairly round to the size of

the money, and, wrapping it carefully in a piece of paper, made a low bow, thanked him for his custom, and hoped he would call at his shop when he wanted anything in his line again.

### A Good "Judge"—in More Senses than One

Mr. Justice Mathew, of the Queen's Bench Division, does not give one an impression at first sight of being either a shrewd Londoner or a stern dispenser of the law of the land; one might take him to be perhaps a benevolent and simple country squire. At any rate, some such impression evidently prevailed in the mind of a professional seller of painted sparrows who came up to Sir James one day in the neighborhood of the Strand, and showing him one of his birds, asked the learned judge's opinion as to what species it might belong to. Sir James stopped, carefully examined the gaudy little creature, and then replied that he had not seen a bird exactly like that one before, but, judging from the old proverb that "birds of a feather flock together," he should say that it was a gaol-bird. The vendor waited for no further particulars, but instantly shuffled away.

### The Prevailing Sense of the House

One night during a heated discussion in the House of Commons in which Horne Tooke bore the principal part, his chief antagonist said: "I'll take the sense of the House." "And I'll take the nonsense, and I'll beat you," retorted Tooke.

### Dr. Jenner a "Respectable Practitioner"

The late Sir William Gull's butler was a great character—a small, dark man, always white-chokered and dressed in black, with a calm, solemn manner. His income from tips must have been large, as the waiting-room was always crammed and the order of audience was settled by him. One day, summoned to the street door by a more than ordinary fierce knock, he found an excited individual just alighted from a cab. "Sir William Gull in?"

"Yes, sir." "I want to see him." "Have you an appointment, sir?" "Appointment? No, I'm very ill. I want to see Sir William." "Impossible, sir, without an appointment." Naughty word emitted by visitor; then—"When can I see him?" "Well, sir"—after consulting paper—"at eleven on Tuesday next." "Tuesday next be hanged! I'm very ill! I tell you I must see some one! Do you know any one near who could see me?" Servant, after cogitation, "Well, sir, there's a gentleman over the way—a very respectable practitioner named Jenner—he might be able to see you."

### Why the Bailiffs Went Away Without Their Prisoner

A ludicrous incident occurred when Carter, the lion king, as he was called, was exhibiting with Ducrow at Astley's. A manager with whom Carter had made and broken an engagement issued a writ against him. The bailiffs came up to the stage-door and asked for Carter. "Show the gentlemen up," said Ducrow. And when they reached the stage there sat Carter composedly in the great cage, with an enormous lion on each side of him. "There's Mr. Carter waiting for you, gentlemen," said Ducrow. "Go in and take him. Carter, my boy, open the door!" Carter proceeded to obey, at the same time eliciting by a private signal a tremendous roar from his companions. The bailiffs staggered back in terror, rolled over each other as they rushed downstairs—and nearly fainted before they reached the street.

### "Sermons in Stone"

A gentleman, passing a country church while under repair, observed to one of the workmen that he thought it would be an expensive job. "Why, yes," replied he; "but in my opinion we shall accomplish what our parson has endeavored to do for the last thirty years in vain." "What is that?" said the gentleman. "Why, bring all the parish to repentance."

### Elderly Men Not Always Wise

An old gentleman without tact, on meeting some ladies whom he had known as girls in his boyhood, cordially remarked: "Bless me! How time flies! Let me see, its thirty-two years come next April since we used to go to school together. I was a little chap then, you remember, and you were fine young women." The old man could never understand why his cordial greeting was received so coldly.

### Johnson and a Clergyman's Ignorance

A certain young clergyman used to come about Dr. Johnson. The doctor said it vexed him to be in his company, his ignorance was so hopeless. "Sir," said Mr. Langton, "his coming about you shows he wishes to help his ignorance." "Sir," said the doctor, "his ignorance is so great I am afraid to show him the bottom of it." [22]

### Consolation for an Injured Man

One writer I can recall, but will not name, to whom Douglas Jerrold had given almost his first appearance in print, was among the most persevering and unscrupulous of his enemies afterwards. Some friends—as friends will—mentioned the ingratitude. "Never mind," Douglas Jerrold retorted, "the boy is sick to windward. It'll all fly back in his face." [25]

### Pinning Him to the Literal Meaning

A young clergyman and an elderly parishioner one day walking home from church, the elderly man slipped on the muddy path and fell.

"Ah," said the clergyman, "sinners stand on slippery places," reaching out his hand to help him up.

"So I see," said his parishioner, "and you certainly keep your footing well."

### Johnson's Confession of Ignorance

A lady once asked Johnson how he came to define *Pastern* the knee of a horse, instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." [22]

**The Judge and the Cabman**

A cabman brought Mr. Justice X— to the judges' entrance to the courts in Carey Street the other morning. Holding out in the vast solitude of his palm the coin given him, he asked indignantly, "What do yer call this?" His lordship gave no heed to the question, but passed through the doorway. "Well, I'm blowed," exclaimed cabby, "and I help to pay that man five thousand quid a year!"

**Thinking "Nothing of It"**

On one occasion, when Dr. Longsdale, Bishop of Lichfield, had spoken on the importance of diligent, painstaking preparation for the pulpit, a verbose young clergyman said: "Why, my lord, I often go to the vestry even without what text I shall preach upon, yet I go up and preach an extempore sermon, and think nothing of it." The bishop replied, "Ah, well! that agrees with what I hear from your people; for they hear the sermon, and they also think nothing of it." [11]

**Johnson and His Fair Flatterer**

It was near the close of Johnson's life that two young ladies, who were warm admirers of his works but had never seen himself, went to Bolt Court, and, asking if he was at home, were shown upstairs where he was writing. He laid down his pen on their entrance, and, as they stood before him, one of the females repeated a speech of some length, previously prepared for the occasion. It was an enthusiastic effusion, to which, when the speaker had finished, she panted for her idol's reply. What was her mortification when all he said was "Fiddle-de-dee, my dear." [24]

**A Witty Description of a Wedding**

A gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage married again immediately after his wife died. Johnson said, "It was the triumph of hope over experience." [22]

### Politeness in Prayer

In a country parish the wife of the lord of the manor came to the church, after her confinement, to return thanks. The parson, aiming to be courtly, and thinking plain "woman" too vulgar, instead of saying, "O Lord! save this woman," said, "O Lord! save this lady!" The clerk, resolving not to be behindhand with him in politeness, answered, "who putteth her ladyship's trust in Thee." [11]

### Counting the Cost

For a wary and thrifty business man, commend us to a commercial traveler who the other day received from a wealthy acquaintance in another city a proposal to marry his daughter. The letter added: "Be sure to come; my daughter is an acknowledged beauty, and is sure to please you." The commercial traveler wrote back that he was willing to come, but cautiously inquired: "Suppose, however, she does not please me; will you pay my traveling expenses home again?"

### Obeying Orders

The officer on duty for the week gives instructions to his orderly, whose business it is to wait at table: "Before removing the soup-plates always ask each person if he would like any more" "Very good, sir." Next day the orderly respectfully bowing to one of the guests, inquires: "Would the gentleman like some more soup?" "Yes, please." "There isn't any left."

### True Enough, and Enough, Though True

The following epigram was made when Dr. Goodenough, Bishop of Carlisle, was one day appointed to preach before the House of Peers:

" Tis well enough that Goodenough  
Before the lords should preach  
For sure enough they're bad enough  
He undertakes to teach."

When the above prelate was made a bishop, a certain dignitary whom the public had expected to get the appointment, being asked by a friend how he came not to be the new bishop, replied : " Because I was not *Good enough!*" [11]

### Marriage—A Revenge

*Mrs. Sternwife* : " Yes, indeed, Miss Firstsummer, I know how exasperating it is to have one's affections trifled with. A young man attempted to trifle with my heart, but I tell you I got even with him."

*Miss Firstsummer* : " You jilted him when he finally proposed, I presume?"

*Mrs. Sternwife* : " No, I married him."

### Transposition !

" My dear," said a gentleman to his wife " our club is going to have all the home comforts."

" Indeed," replied she, " and when is our home going to have all the club comforts?"

### Johnson's Letter to the Earl of Chesterfield

" Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms or was repulsed from your door ; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect for I never had a patron before.

" Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary and cannot impart it ; till I am known and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations

where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself." [22]

### Johnson and "Fools"

"*Mrs. Knowles*: 'I hope, doctor, thou wilt not remain unforgiving; and that you will renew your friendship, and joyfully meet at last in those bright regions where pride and prejudice can never enter.  
*Dr. Johnson*: 'Meet her!\*' I never desire to meet fools anywhere!'" [22]

### Meat or Bones?

The Rev. John Newton one day heard a minister preach who affected great accuracy in his discourses, and who had occupied nearly an hour on several labored and nice distinctions. Having a high esteem for Mr. Newton's judgment, he inquired of him whether he thought these distinctions were full and judicious?

Mr. Newton said he thought them not very full, as a very important one had been omitted.

"What can that be?" inquired the minister, "for I have taken more than ordinary care to enumerate them fully."

"I think not," replied Mr. Newton, "for when many of your congregation have traveled several miles for a meal, I think you should not have forgotten the important distinction which must ever exist between meat and bones." [11]

### A Prayer Which Could not be Answered

The Rev. Robert Hall had a very large mouth. He was as well aware of this as any one else, and one morning at a breakfast party at Bristol, on the occasion of family prayers, a young minister, referring to a sermon about to be delivered by the distinguished divine, prayed the Lord would "open his mouth wider than ever." When they rose from their knees,

---

\* Miss Jane Harry, who had offended Johnson by becoming a proselyte to Quakerism.

Mr. Hall said, "Well, sir, did you pray that my mouth might be opened wider? It couldn't well be done, sir, unless it was slit from ear to ear, sir." [11]

### **Going to "Star" or "To Starve"**

Charles Mathews once went to perform at Wakefield, where, owing to the depressed state of trade, the drama received no support. He was afterwards asked how much money he had made at Wakefield, and replied :

"Not a shilling!"

"Not a shilling?" repeated his questioner. "Why, I thought you went there to star?"

"So I did," replied Mathews; but they spell it with a 've' in Wakefield."

### **A Quaker's Impatience to See his Visitor "Again"**

A gentleman of indolent habits made a business of visiting his friends extensively. He was once cordially received by a Quaker, who treated his visitor with great attention and politeness for several days. At last he said :

"My friend, I am afraid thee will never visit me again."

"Oh, yes, I shall," said the visitor; "I have enjoyed my visit much; I shall certainly come again."

"Nay," said the Quaker, "I think thee will not visit me again."

"What makes you think I shall not come again?" asked the visitor.

"If thee does *never leave*," said the Quaker, "how canst thee come again?"

### **The Wrecked Archbishop and the Eleventh Commandment**

Archbishop Usher, when crossing the Channel from Ireland to this country, was wrecked on some part of the Coast of Wales. On this disastrous occasion, after having reached the shore, he made the best of his way to the house of a clergyman, who resided not

far from the spot on which he was cast. Without communicating his name or his exalted station, the archbishop introduced himself as a brother clergyman in distress, and stated the particulars of his misfortune. The Cambrian divine, suspecting his unknown visitor to be an impostor, gave him no very courteous reception, and having intimated his suspicions, said: "I daresay you can't tell me how many commandments there are?"—"There are eleven," replied the archbishop, very meekly.—"Repeat the eleventh," rejoined the other, "and I will relieve your distress."—"Then *you* will put the commandment into practice," answered the primate; "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." [11]

### Perhaps It Was the Fault of the Absent One

A gentleman once told Dr. Johnson that a friend of his, looking into the dictionary which the doctor had lately published, could not find the word *ocean*. "Not find 'ocean!'" exclaimed our lexicographer; "sir, I doubt the veracity of your information!" He instantly stalked into his library and, opening the work in question with the utmost impatience, at last triumphantly put his finger upon the subject of research, adding, "There, sir, there is *ocean!*" The gentleman was preparing to apologize for the mistake; but Dr. Johnson good-naturedly dismissed the subject with "Never mind it, sir; perhaps your friend spells *ocean* with an *s.*" [24]

### A Witty Drunkard

The following happened on a crowded car. A seedy-looking man, very much the worse for having looked too often on the wine when it was red rose to give his seat to a lady, when a robust man slipped into the vacant seat, leaving the lady still standing. "Sa-a-y, you—you feller you," said the boozy but chivalrous individual, as he swayed to and fro, hanging to a strap—"I—I'm drunk, I know, but I—I'll git over it, I will; but you—you're a hog, an' you—you'll never git over it—no, sir, never." And the other passengers agreed with him.

### A Pointed Question and a Rough Answer

It is related that at Dunvegan, Lady MacLeod having poured out for Dr. Johnson sixteen cups of tea, asked him if a small basin would not save him trouble and be more agreeable.

"I wonder, madam," answered he, roughly, "why all ladies ask me such questions. It is to save yourselves trouble, madam, and not me."

The lady was silent, and resumed her task. [27]

### An Open Question

At a country debating club, the question was discussed whether there is more happiness in the possession or pursuit of an object?

"Mr. President," said an orator, "suppose I was courtin' a gal, and she was to run away, and I was to run after her; wouldn't I be happier when I catch'd her than when I was running after her?"

Mr. President replied that he could not see how that was to be ascertained before she was caught.

### A Methodical Maniac

A gentleman of the name of Man, residing near a private mad-house, met one of its poor inhabitants, who had broken from his keeper. The maniac suddenly stopped, and resting upon a large stick, exclaimed, "Who are you, sir?"

The gentleman was rather alarmed, but thinking to divert his attention by a pun, replied, "I am a *double* man; I am Man by name, and man by nature."

"Are you so?" rejoined the other; "why, I am a man *beside* myself, so *we two* will fight *you two*."

He then knocked down poor Man, and ran away.

### A Recognized Need

A stormy discussion arose once in Douglas Jerrold's company, during which a gentleman rose to settle the matter in dispute. Waving his hand majestically over the excited disputants, he began: "Gentlemen, all I want is common sense!"

"Exactly," Douglas Jerrold interrupted, "that is precisely what you *do* want."

The discussion was lost in a burst of laughter. [25]

#### Division of Labor in Observing the Church Calendar

There are many advantages in variety of conditions, one of which is boasted by a divine, who rejoices that, between both classes, "all the holidays of the church are properly kept, since the rich observe the feasts, and the poor observe the fasts."

#### Club Etiquette—Learned from Observation

There have recently been published several very edifying works upon "Etiquette," and the mode of behaving well in company. As no book touching the conduct of club society has yet appeared, and this is the season of the year at which those admirable institutions are making weekly acquisitions in the shape of new members, we have thought it might be neither superfluous nor disagreeable to give the recently admitted candidates a few leading rules for their behavior, in the way of directions.

Thus, in the first place, find fault with everything and bully the waiters. What do you pay your subscription for, but to secure that privilege? Abuse the committee for mismanagement, until you get into it yourself—then abuse everybody else.

Never shut the door of any room into which you may go, or out of which you may come.

When the evening papers arrive, pounce upon three; keep one in your hand reading, another under your arm, ready to relieve that; and sit down upon a third. By this means you possess yourself of the opinions of all parties, without being influenced by any one of them.

If you wish to dine early and cheap, order some cold meat just before three o'clock—it will then be charged as luncheon; bread, pickles, etc., *gratis*.

Drink table beer, because, as the Scotch gentleman said of something very different, "It is very pleasant and costs nothing."

If you dine on the joint, get it first and cut all the best parts off, and help yourself to twice as much as you want for fear you should never see it again.

If you are inclined to read the newspaper when you have finished your meat, make use of the cheese as a reading desk ; it is very convenient, and, moreover, makes the paper smell of cheese and the cheese taste of paper.

If you come in and see a man whom you know dining quietly by himself, or two men dining sociably together, draw your chair to their table and volunteer to join them. This they cannot well refuse, although they may wish you at Old Scratch. Then call for the bill of fare and order your dinner, which, as the others had half done before your arrival, will not be served till they have quite finished theirs. This will enable them to enjoy the gratification of seeing you proceed through the whole of your meal from soup to cheese inclusive, while they are eating their fruit and sipping their wine.

If you drink tea, call for a "cup" of tea ; when the waiter has brought it abuse him for its being too strong, and desire him to fetch an empty cup and a small jug of boiling water ; then divide the tea into the two cups and fill up both with the water. By this method you get two cups of tea for the price of one.  
*N.B.*—The milk and sugar not charged for.

If you are a literary man, always write your books at the club—pen, ink, and paper *gratis* : a circumstance which of itself is likely to make your productions profitable.

When there is a ballot, blackball everybody you do not happen to know. If a candidate is not one of your own personal acquaintance, he cannot be fit to come there.

If you are interested about a friend, post yourself directly in front of his balloting box and pester everybody, whether you know them or not, to give him a vote; this, if pertinaciously adhered to, will invariably settle his fate one way or the other.

Always walk about the coffee-room with your hat on to show your own independence and your respect for the numerous noblemen and gentlemen who are sitting at dinner without theirs.

When you are alone in any of the rooms where writing materials are deposited, help yourself to covers, notepaper, sealing-wax, and black-lead pencils at discretion; they are as much yours as any other member's; and, as you contribute to pay for them what difference can it make whether you use them at the club or at home!

When you go away, if it is a wet night, and you are without a cloak or great coat, take the first that fits you; you can send it back in the morning, when it is fine; remember you do, and explain that it was taken by mistake. This rule applies equally to umbrellas.

Never pay your subscription till the very last day fixed by the regulations; why should the trustees get the interest of your money for two or three months? Besides, when strangers come in and see the house, they will find your name over the fireplace, which will show that you belong to the club.

An observance to these general rules, with a little attention to a few minor points, which it is scarcely possible to allude to more particularly here, will render you a most agreeable member of the society to which you belong, and which it will be right to denounce everywhere else as the most execrable hole in London, in which you can get nothing fit either to eat or drink, but in which you, yourself, nevertheless, breakfast, dine, and sup every day, when you are not otherwise engaged. [28]

### Skeleton Humor

Nothing amuses me more than to observe the utter want of perception of a joke in some minds. Mrs. Jackson called the other day, and spoke of the oppressive heat of last week.

"Heat, ma'am!" I said, "it was so dreadful here, that I found there was nothing left for it but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones."

"Take off your flesh and sit in your bones, sir? Oh, Mr. Smith! how could you do that?" she exclaimed with the utmost gravity.

"Nothing more easy, ma'am; come and see next time."

But she ordered her carriage, and evidently thought it a very unorthodox proceeding. [2]

### A Tribute to Scotch Thrift

A gentleman, talking to Dr. Johnson, spoke of some Scotch settlers who had taken possession of a barren part of America, and wondered why they should choose it.

Johnson replied: "Why, sir, all barrenness is comparative. The Scotch would not know it to be barren."

### Colman's Wit and Humor

Colman's best jokes have been chronicled by Mr. Peake.\* Here are a few:

Colman and Bannister were dining one day with Lord Erskine, the ex-chancellor, who, in the course of conversation on rural affairs, boasted that he kept on his pasture land nearly a thousand sheep. "I perceive, then," said Colman, "your lordship has still an eye to the Woolsack."

---

Colman, himself no giant, delighted in quizzing persons of short stature. Liston and pretty little Mrs. Liston were dining with him, and towards evening, when preparing to leave their host, Liston said, "Come, Mrs. L., let us be going." "Mrs. L. [ELL], indeed," exclaimed Colman, "Mrs. Inch, you mean."

---

\*Reprinted from "Random Records," by George Colman the younger. 2 vols., 1830. Dedicated, by permission, to George IV.

One day, speaking of authorship as a profession, Colman said, "It is a very good walking-stick, but very bad crutches." (This is usually attributed to Sir Walter Scott.)

---

A Mr. Faulkener, from the provinces, had been engaged at the Haymarket. Colman was disappointed with his new actor, who had to deliver the following line, which he spoke in a nasal tone:

"Ah! where is my honor now?"

Colman, who was behind the scenes, took a hasty pinch of snuff, and muttered, "I wish *your honor* was back at Newcastle again, with all my heart."

---

A *debutant* at the Haymarket appeared as OCTAVIAN, in the *Mountaineers*. It was soon discovered that he was incompetent; Colman was in the green-room, and growing fidgety when the new performer came to the line,

"I shall weep soon, and then I shall be better."

"I'll be hung if you will," said Colman, "if you cry your eyes out."

---

Colman was habitually late to take rest, and was consequently very late in bed during the daytime. On Mr. Theodore Hook calling one afternoon at his house, his name was immediately carried up to Colman.

"What's the hour?"

"Past three, sir."

"What, does Mr. Hook suppose I rise with the lark! Ask him to return at any reasonable hour, and I shall be glad to see him."

---

George IV presented to Colman the commission of Lieutenant of the Yeoman of the Guard, in 1820. On the first birthday that Colman attended officially, in

full costume, his Majesty seemed much pleased to see him, and observed, "Your uniform, George, is so well made, that I don't see the hooks and eyes."

On which, Colman, unhooking his coat, said, "Here are my eyes; where are yours?"

---

At the table of George IV, when Prince Regent, the royal host said, "Why, Colman, you are older than I am!"

"Oh, no, sir," replied Colman, "I could not *take the liberty* of coming into the world *before* your royal highness."

---

Turning to the Duke of Wellington (who was gold-stick in waiting), the king remarked, "George Colman puts me in mind of Pam."

"If that is the case," exclaimed Colman, "the only difference between the Duke of Wellington and me is, that I am the hero of Loo. He, of Waterloo!"

---

A party of visitors were standing before a whole-length portrait of the celebrated Lord North, in full peer's robes with a long white wand in his hand which no one appeared to understand. After nodding his head for half a minute, and affecting to rouse, he said, "Eh! white wand? don't know, egad! but suppose it represents the North Pole!"

---

When Boaden produced his play of *The Italian Monk* at the Haymarket, Colman was so jealous of his success, that next morning at the *cutting* rehearsal, he said to his stage manager, "Hang the fellow, we shall now be pestered with his plays, year after year!" It was of this play that Boaden said he had in it given Billy (Shakespeare) the go-by; which obtained for him the sobriquet of *Billy the-go-by Boaden*.

John Taylor sent to Colman a volume of his poems which bore the motto,—

“I left no calling for his idle trade ;”  
to which Colman added,—

“For none were blind enough to ask thine aid.”

Now Taylor was an oculist, but having little or no practice, the satire was the more poignant. Taylor heard of this *jeu d'esprit*; and shortly after, being in company with Colman, the word *calling* was incidentally mentioned by the latter, when Taylor, with great quickness, interrupted him with, “Talking of *callings*, my dear boy, your father was a great dramatic ‘English Merchant’ : now *your* dealings are and always will be those of a small *Coal-man*. I think I had you there ? What, have I paid you for your ‘None were blind enough.’ eh ? ”

Colman was evidently hurt.

---

Hackett, the American comedian, had been engaged by Mr. Bunn, at Drury Lane. Being in want of a *new* part, he, or some one for him, had made an alteration in Colman’s comedy of *Who Wants a Guinea?* substituting a character—Solomon Swap—for the original Solomon Grundy. This amalgamation had to undergo the inspection of the examiner of plays, who was also the author of the comedy. Here was a situation ! Colman thus addressed Bunn, the ostensible manager, on the subject :

“SIR :—In respect to the alterations made by Mr. Hackett, a most appropriate name on the present occasion, were the established play of any living dramatist except myself so mutilated, I should express to the Lord Chamberlain, the grossness and unfairness of the manager who encouraged such a proceeding ; but as the character of Solomon Grundy was originally a part of my own writing, I shall request his grace to license ‘the rubbish,’ as you call it, which you have sent me.—Your obedient servant,  
G. COLMAN.”

He was an admirable punster. Sheridan once said, when George made a successful hit, "I hate a pun, but Colman almost reconciles me to the infliction."

---

He was once asked if he knew Theodore Hook? "Oh, yes," was his reply, "Hook and I (eye) are old associates."

---

A young man being hardly pressed to sing in a company where Colman formed one of the party, solemnly assured them that he could not sing; and at last said, rather hastily, "That they only wished to make a butt of him." "Oh, no," said Colman, "my good sir, we only want to get a stave out of you." [29]

### The Adulterator's Alphabet

**A**'s the mock Auction—go, buy if you choose  
The trash palmed upon you by duffers and Jews.

**B** is the Baker whose loaves sell the faster  
When made up of alum, potatoes and plaster.

**C** is the Clergyman—mind he don't mix  
His Rubric with Pusey's or Claphamite tricks.

**D** is the Druggist—the *Lancet* explains  
How he poisons each drug and increases your pains.

**E**'s the Excise that affixes its locks—  
But very queer mixtures come out of the docks.

**F** is the Fellow—whose furniture falls  
To pieces, as soon as it's set round your walls.

**G** is the Grocer—the rascal is he  
Who puts sand in your sugar and sticks in your tea.

**H** is the Hatter—his hats (which you bet)  
Turn shamefully brown the first time they get wet.

**I** is the Ink-maker—he's a nice fellow—  
His deepest jet black in a week becomes yellow.

**J** is the Jeweller—I know who is sold  
When you've bought his sham gems really set in sham  
gold.

**K** is K. G., and a title debased  
Since Nick and Nurse Ab in the Chapel were graced.

**L** is the Laureate who tenders us *for* song,  
A lachrymose whine when we wanted a war-song.

**M** is the Member—the place-hunting elf,  
Selling rubbish he's no right to sell—that's himself.

**N** is the Nurse who your suffering insults,  
Who gives Godfrey to babies and plunders adults.

**O** is the Omnibus Cad who deceives  
Concerning his route, and who lets in the thieves.

**P** is the Publican, neck-deep in sin,  
With salt in his beer and with turps in his gin.

**Q**'s the Queen's Government (that's but a phrase),  
Who delude their good mistress in all kinds of ways.

**R**'s the Romance writer, read with a groan;  
What's good he has prigged, and what's stupid's  
his own.

**S** is the Stock-jobber, none can dispute  
That a bull or a bear is a low kind of brute.

**T** is the Tailor who makes us all wroth,  
With his skimping bad fits and his rotten old cloth.

**U** is your Uncle, the usurer Pop,  
And legalized cheating goes on at his shop.

**V** is the Vintner, you trace when you dine  
His crimes in the mess that is brought you for wine

**W** is the Watchmaker, nine times a week  
His "warrants" should bring up himself to the Beak

**X** (with an e)'s the Exchequer, which axes  
All sorts of unjust and irrational taxes.

**Y** is a Yokel—when *he* meets your eyes  
Look out—he's most likely a thief in disguise.

**Z**'s Zadkiel, the quack, who with "Venus" and  
"Mars,"  
Diddles Zanies by lying reports from the stars. [1]

### A Keen Judge

Justice Taunton was remarkable for speaking sometimes rather sharply to barristers who occupied unnecessarily the time of the court, or who fell into errors in point of law. On one occasion a request was made to him to enlarge a rule. He expressed his intention to do so.

Up started a learned sergeant, and exclaimed, "My lord, in the whole course of my experience I have never known such a rule, under such circumstances, to be enlarged."

"Then, my learned brother," replied Taunton, "I shall have the pleasure of enlarging the rule and your experience at the same time."

### A Question Which Needed No Answer

Hook's street fun was irrepressible. We read of his walking up to a pompous person in the *trottoir* in the Strand, and saying to him, "I beg your pardon, sir, but may I ask, *are you anybody particular?*—"but he did not wait for the answer of the magnifico. [28]

### Referring Him to a Good Authority

A late professor taking a country walk, met one of those beings usually called fools.

"Pray," says the professor, accosting him, "how long can a person live without brains?"

"I dunno," replied the fellow, scratching his head, "pray, how long have you lived yourself, sir?"

### An Old-fashioned Gardener on Scientific Farming

A noble lord, in conversation with his gardener one day, said: "George, the time will come soon when a man will be able to carry the manure for an acre of land in one of his waistcoat pockets."

To which the gardener replied: "I believe it, sir; but he will be able to carry all the crop in the other pocket."

**"I Slept, and O How Sweet the Dream "**

I slept, and O how sweet the dream !  
 In Grange's shop there sat but two ;  
 And strawberries red and iciest cream,  
 Were brought to me by I know who  
 He whispered low, his love was told,  
 In cream the fruit he made me plunge,  
 And if I found the cream too cold,  
 He bade me try a cake of sponge.

He talked of all that makes up life,  
 Of dresses, dances, drives and drums ;  
 Of ponies which he'd buy his wife,  
 And bracelets costing awful sums.  
 His tones grew low—I listened well—  
 The accents changed to " Mary Teggs !  
 Your ma have rang the breakfast bell,  
 And if your late you'll git no heggs." [i]

**Kingly Courtesy and Quaker Consistency**

When Penn stood before Charles II with his hat on, the king put off his. " Friend Charles," said Penn, " why dost thou not put on thy hat ? " " 'Tis the custom of this place," replied the monarch, " that only one person should be covered at a time."

**A Grim and Witty Description of the Experience of Some Wives**

Referring to the poverty too often endured by artists, poets, authors, and other men of genius, Douglas Jerrold makes Mr. Mammoth tell his wife (in the piece entitled *Law and Lions*) that the wives of geniuses live only in the kitchen of imagination." [25]

**Why "The Spectator" excelled "The Tattler"**

When Sir Richard Steele was made a member of the Commons it was expected from his writings that he would have been an admirable orator; but not proving so, De Foe said, " He had better have continued the *Spectator* than started the *Tattler*."

### Thackeray Broadening Carlyle's Vision

Carlyle happened, in the presence of Thackeray, to speak in terms of qualified admiration of Titian. "Oh!" said he, "they talk a great deal about Titian; I could never see much in him."

Thackeray tapped him on the shoulder, and whispered, "Do you think that is *Titian's* fault?"

### An Opportunity for Boys of the Right Sort

A farmer sent to an orphan asylum for a boy that was smart, active, brave, tractable, prompt, industrious, clean, pious, intelligent, good-looking, reserved and modest. The superintendent wrote back that, unfortunately, they had only human boys in that institution.

### Erskine's Humor

Mr. Espinasse was conversing with Erskine and a Mr. Lamb, when Erskine remarked how much habit and the practice of speaking gave a man confidence in addressing the court. "I protest I don't find it so," said Mr. Lamb, "for though I've been a good many years at the bar, and have had my share of business, I don't find my confidence increase: indeed the contrary is rather my case." "Why," replied Erskine, "it's nothing wonderful that a Lamb should grow sheepish."

---

One night Erskine was coming out of the House of Commons when he was stopped by a member going in, who accosted him. "Who's up, Erskine?" "Windham," was the reply. "What's he on?" "His legs"

---

Erskine was colonel of the volunteer corps called „The Law Association.” Some one wishing to quiz him told him that his corps was much inferior to the Excise Volunteers, then notoriously the worst in London. "So they ought to be," good-humoredly observed Erskine, "seeing that the Excise people are all Cæsars (seizers)."

### A Witty Definition of Tact

Sidney Godolphin—who held office during several successive reigns, and in that of Queen Anne became Lord High Treasurer, and received the title of earl—was noted for his tact, his knowledge of business, and his capacity for making himself useful. Charles II said of him, “Sidney Godolphin is never in the way, and never out of the way.”

### The First Cake after the Wedding

*Young Wife*: “What’s the matter, my dear? Don’t you like pound-cake?”

*Husband (hesitatingly)*: “Y-e-s, love! but I don’t care for ten-pound cake.”

---

Shortly after marriage my wife produced her first cake on a Sunday afternoon, asking me to cut it. As we were alone, I suggested we should not cut it, when my wife said, “Nonsense—we can’t have it and eat it, too.” Putting the knife to it I found that it was as hard as plaster of Paris. “No,” said I, “but it appears likely that we can have it and *can’t eat it.*” That cake was rolled about the garden like a grind-stone for a week or two, and the fowls must have worn their beaks very much in their efforts to demolish it. Things have improved since then. [20]

### “I Cannot Bear to Say Farewell!”—and the Reason Why

I cannot bear to say farewell,  
And yet I know ‘tis right;  
I sniff the dinner’s fragrant smell,  
I have an appetite.  
But as thou dost not bid me stay,  
Of course I cannot stop;  
So fare thee well—my fare to-day  
Will be one mutton chop. [1]

### Joseph Gillott and Turner

One day, Mr. Gillott, the well-known pen manufacturer of Birmingham, sallied from his hotel,

determined, at any price, to obtain admission to the enchanted house in Queen Anne Street, where Turner lived among his pictures. He was rich, he was enthusiastic, he believed strongly in the power of the golden key to open any door. He arrived at the blistered, dirty door of the house with the black-crusted windows. He pulled at the bell; the bell answered with a querulous melancholy tinkle.

There was a long unhospitable pause; then an old woman looked up from the area, and presently ascended, and tardily opened the door. She snapishly asked Mr. Gillott's business. He told her in his blandest voice,

"Can't let e' in," was the answer, and she tried to slam the door. But during the parley the crafty and determined Dives had put his foot in; and now, refusing to any longer parley, he pushed past the feeble, enraged old she-Cerberus, and hurried upstairs to the gallery.

In a moment Turner was out upon him like a spider on another spider who has invaded his web.

Mr. Gillott bowed, introduced himself, and stated that he had come to buy.

"Don't want to sell," or some other rebuff, was the answer; but Gillott shut his ears to all Turner's angry vituperations.

"Have you ever seen any of our Birmingham pictures, Mr. Turner?" was his only remark.

"Never 'eard of 'em," said Turner.

Gillott pulled from his pocket a fragile bundle of Birmingham bank-notes (about £5000 worth).

"Mere paper," said Turner with grim humor, a little softened, and enjoying the joke.

"To be bartered for mere canvas," said Gillott, waving his hands at the "Building of Carthage" and its companions.

"You're a rum fellow," said Turner, slowly entering into negotiations, which ended in Gillott's eventually carrying off in his cab some £5000 worth of Turner's pictures.

### Rude Wit

Horne Tooke, who was as rude as he was republican, being asked by George III whether he played at cards, replied: "No, your Majesty; the fact is, I cannot tell a king from a knave."

### Looking Better when Least Seen

A gentleman who imagined that he possessed gifts for the ministry, went to consult the Rev. Rowland Hill on the subject, and talked about "hiding his talents." Mr. Hill, who entertained different views of the matter to what the gentleman himself did, intimated that "for his part, he thought the closer he hid them the better." [11]

### A Promise Defined, Sought and Obtained

An elector of a country town, who was warmly pressed during a contest to give his vote to a certain candidate, replied that it was impossible, since he had already promised to vote for the other.

"Oh," said the candidate, "in election matters, promises, you know, go for nothing."

"If that is the case," rejoined the elector, "I promise you my vote at once."

### Result of Being "Not Under the Law"

One of those commonly called Antinomians one day called on Rowland Hill, to call him to account for his too severe and legal gospel.

"Do you, sir," asked Rowland, "hold the Ten Commandments to be a rule of life to Christians?"

"Certainly not," replied the visitor.

The minister rang the bell, and on the servant making his appearance, he quietly said, "John, show that man the door, and keep your eye on him until he is beyond the reach of every article of wearing apparel, or other property in the hall!" [11]

### Johnson on "Derangement"

Johnson would not allow the word *derange* to be an English word. "Sir," said a gentleman who had

some pretensions to literature, "I have seen it in a book." "Not in a *bound* book," said Johnson; "*disarrange* is the word we ought to use instead of it." [22]

### **A Lord's Reason for Seeking the Lost Ten Tribes**

There was a meeting in the city to receive a report from the society for the discovery of the lost tribes of Israel. Lord —— was asked to take the chair. "I take," he replied, "a great interest in your researches, gentlemen. The fact is, I have borrowed money from all the Jews now known, and if you can find a new set I shall feel very much obliged." [25]

### **As Green as Two Peas**

Two silly brothers, twins, were very much about town in Hook's time; and they took every pains, by dressing alike, to deceive their friends as to their identity. Tom Hill was expatiating upon these modern Dromios, at which Hook grew impatient. "Well," said Hill, "you will admit that they resemble each other wonderfully; there are alike as two peas." "They are," retorted Hook, "and quite as green!" [28]

### **An Opposing Counsel Helping to Find Bail**

There is an anecdote related of Sergeant Davy, a great lawyer of the last age. A gentleman once appeared in the Court of King's Bench to give bail in the sum of £3000.

Sergeant Davy, wanting to display his wit, said to him, sternly, "And pray, sir, how do you make out that you are worth £3000?"

The gentleman stated the particulars of his property up to £2940.

"That's all very good, but you want £60 more to be worth £3000."

"For that sum," replied the gentleman, no way disconcerted, "I have a note of hand of one Mr. Sergeant Davy, and I hope he will have the honesty soon to settle it."

The laughter that this reply excited extended even to the bench.

The sergeant looked abashed. And Lord Mansfield observed in his usual urbane tone, "Well, brother Davy, I think we may accept the bail."

### The Origin of Evil

In the year 1869, when a student at the Nottingham Institute, I observed on a street wall an announcement that a lecture would be delivered at certain Assembly-rooms, by a lady, on the subject of "Love, Courtship and Marriage,—Not Understood!—and Why!" The lady was Mrs. H—— L——, who at that time was a "Free Thinker."

Never having heard a woman speak in public, I resolved to correct that experience, and went. A *reserved* seat was at my disposal, and, for the sum of sixpence, I secured a seat in the very front row. It was soon apparent that the place was a nest of free-thinkers. After a short interval the lady began to throw what she called light into our dark minds.

The substance of all her arguments was that if the Bible had not been written, evil would not have been suggested, and consequently that we should never have known by experience half the evils with which we are now acquainted. Speaking of the marriage laws of England, the lecturer said that these should be reversed so far as woman was concerned, and that in regards "obeying" the husband, she "had an agreement with her gentleman before hand that she shouldn't mean a word of it." This confession came after an earnest exhortation to the "young people present" to be truthful and sincere before marriage, in order that their lives might be happy afterwards.

The lecture being over, a general invitation to a discussion was given by the chairman.

Rising, I asked the lady to tell us "where all the evil came from that was in the world before the Bible was written"; adding that "the evil there described must have existed before it was described, and was therefore not produced by the description." Next I complimented her on the splendid advice she had

given to "young people" on honesty and truthfulness before marriage; but, turning on her, I put the question as to what good she expected to come of her advice, after she had admitted going to church with a lie in her mouth, which—although her husband was not deceived by it,—had deceived the clergyman who married them. "Can you," said I, "fairly charge the Bible with having originated this particular evil?" Her replies were evasive generalities, which left both my questions untouched, and I left the room telling the lecturer that the Bible had lost nothing in my estimation by her remarks, and that the mystery of the origin of evil was a mystery still. [20]

### The Ruling Passion Strong in—Disappointment

"You'll be the Surrey Shakespeare," said a friend to Douglas Jerrold, on the success of *Thomas à Becket*.

"The sorry Shakespeare, you mean," was the quick retort of Jerrold (referring to his poor remuneration). [25]

### Drawing on His Only Fund—Humor

When Archbishop Secker was enthroned, or soon after, he gave a charge to his clergy, and among other articles found great fault with the scanty allowance paid to curates. Mr. Patten, curate of Whitstable, was there, though not summoned—as the primate, afraid of his remarks, had ordered the proctor to leave him out of the list.

He appeared greatly pleased with the sentiments of the prelate, and expressed his satisfaction by rising up and bowing to the archbishop, saying in a loud voice, "I thank your grace."

After the charge was over, the proctor, by mistake, called the Rev. Mr. Patten, who, bustling through the crowd, came up to the archbishop.

His grace, seeing he could not avoid the interview, began with the usual question, "You are, sir, I think, curate of Whitstable?"

To which Patten replied, "I am, may it please your grace, and have for it received from your grace's pre-

decessors the paltry sum of £30 per annum only, although the living brings in above £300."

"Don't enlarge, Mr. Patten," said the archbishop.

"No, but I hope your grace *will*," rejoined the curate.

Patten long refused to read the Athanasian Creed. The archdeacon, reproving him for that omission, told him that his grace the archbishop read it.

"That may be," answered Patten. "Perhaps he may believe it, but I don't. He believes at the rate of £7000 per annum, I at that of less than £50."

In his last illness, Patten was in great distress, which Dr. Secker hearing, sent him ten guineas (angels) by the archdeacon, to whom he made the following acknowledgment: "Thank his grace most heartily, and tell him now I know him to be a man of God, for I have seen his good *angels*." [11]

### Daylight!

A sailor, in describing the first efforts to become nautical, said that just at the close of a dark night he was sent aloft to see if he could see a light. As he was no great favorite with the lieutenant he was not hailed for some hours.

"Aloft there?" at length was heard from the lieutenant.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Do you see a light?"

"Yes, sir."

"What light?"

"*Daylight*, by jingo."

### A Madman Saved from Starvation by a Doctor's Wit

In a lunatic asylum, among the more remarkable patients, was one who was with much difficulty saved from inflicting death upon himself by refusing to take any food. He was under the impression that he was dead, and declared that dead people never eat.

It was obvious to all that the issue must soon be fatal if no plan was found out to disabuse him of the absurd notion.

The humane doctor resident in the establishment bethought him of the following stratagem to save the madman's life. He got half a dozen of the attendants dressed up in white shrouds and their faces and hands rubbed with chalk, so as to resemble dead men. He then made them march in single file, with death-like silence into a room adjoining that of the patient, where they sat down to a hearty meal. The door was purposely left open, that the man who thought he was dead might see them.

"Hallo!" cried he presently, to an attendant, "who are these?"

"Dead men," was the reply.

"What!" said he. "Do dead men eat?"

"To be sure they do, as you see," answered the attendant.

"If that's the case, then," cried he, "I'll join them, for I'm starving."

In this way the spell was instantly broken, and the patient saved from death by voluntary starvation.

### **Rochester's Wit Capped by Charles II's Humor**

The witty Earl of Rochester, the favorite of Charles II, one day had the audacity to inscribe the following epigram on the door of the king's bed-chamber :

"Here lies our sovereign lord the king,  
Whose word no man relies on;  
Who never said a foolish thing,  
And never did a wise one."

When the king read the inscription, "True," said he; "my sayings are my own, but my doings are those of my ministers."

### **Ecclesiastical Learning in the Time of Charles I**

The Assembly of Divines, who, in the time of Charles I, were appointed at Westminster to regulate the ecclesiastical government, and all matters of religion, consisted of a mixture of laymen and divines, Episcopalians, Independents and Presbyterians. For the most part, they were men of little parts and as little learning, and Selden, who was one of the lay-

members, used to take great delight in puzzling them by questions and objections beyond their understanding.

A writer of that period, who was well acquainted with them and their proceedings, gives this account of Selden and the Assembly: "Mr. Selden visits them as the Persians used to see wild asses fight: when the Commons have tired him with their new law, these brethren refresh him with their mad gospel. They lately were graveled betwixt Jerusalem and Jericho; they knew not the distance between those two places—one said twenty miles, another ten, and at last it was concluded to be seven, for this strange reason, that fish was brought from Jericho to Jerusalem market. Mr. Selden smiled, and said perhaps the fish was salt, and so stopped their mouths." [11]

#### Sydney Smith's Description of Curates

A curate—there is something which excites compassion in the very name of a curate!!! How many men of Purple, Palaces and Preferment, can let himself loose against this poor working man of God, we are at a loss to conceive—a learned man in a hovel, with sermons and saucepans, lexicons and bacon, Hebrew books and ragged children—good and patient—a comforter and a preacher—the first and purest pauper in the hamlet, and yet showing that, in the midst of his worldly misery, he has the heart of a gentleman, and the spirit of a Christian, and the kindness of a pastor; and this man though he has exercised the duties of a clergyman for twenty years—though he has most ample testimonies of conduct from clergymen as respectable as any bishop—though an archbishop add his name to the list of witnesses, is not good enough for Bishop Marsh; but is pushed out in the street, with his wife and children, and his little furniture, to surrender his honor, his faith, his conscience and his learning—or to starve! . . . Men of very small incomes, be it known to his lordship, have very often very acute feelings; and a curate trod on feels a pang as great as when a bishop is refuted. [2]

### A School for Adults

In Thomas Hood's time there were, of course, no board schools. Amongst the foundations for the promotion of national education, Hood had heard of schools for adults; but he doubted of their existence.

. . . It seemed too whimsical to contemplate fathers and venerable grandfathers, emulating the infant generation, and seeking for instruction in the rudiments. . . . The picture (wrote Hood) notwithstanding is realized! Elderly people seem to have considered that they will be as awkwardly situated in the other world, as here, without their alphabet—and schools for grown persons to learn to read are no more Utopian than New Harmony. The following letter from an old gentleman, whose education had been neglected, confirms me in the fact. It is copied *verbatim ad literatim* from the original which fell into my hands by accident:

*Black Heath, November, 1827.*

DEER BROTHER,—My honnered Parents being Both desist I feal my deuty to give you Sum Acount of the Proggress I have maid in my studdys since last Vocation. You will be gratafied to hear I am at the Hed of my Class, and Tom Hodges is at its bottom, tho He was Seventy last Burth Day, and I am onely going on for Three Skore. I have begun Gografy, and do exsizes on the Globs. In figgers I am all most out the fore Simples and going into Compounds next weak. In the mean time hop you will aprove my Hand riting as well as my spelling, witch I have took grate panes with, as you desired. As for the French Tung Mr. Legender says I shall soon get the pronounication as well as a Parishiner, but the Master thinks its not advisable to begin Lattin at my advanced ears.

With respecks to my Pearsonal comfits I am verry happy and midling Well, xcept the old Cumplant in my To—but the Master is so kind as to let me have a Cushion for myfeat. If their is any thing to cumplane of its the Vittles. Our Cook don't understand Maid dishe. Her Currys is xcrabble. Tom Hodges' Foot Man brings him Evry Day soop from Birches. I wish

you providid me the same. On the hole I wish on  
menny Acounts I was a Day border partickly as  
Barlow sleeps in our Room and coffs all nite long.  
His brother's Ashmy is wus then his. He has took  
lately to snuff and I have wishes to do the like. It's  
very dull after Supper since Mr. Grierson took away  
the fellers Pips, and forbid smocking, and allmost  
raized a Riot on that hed, and some of the Boys was  
to have Been horst for it. I am happy (to) say I have  
never been floged as yet and onely Caind once, and  
that was for damming at the Cook's chops becos  
they was so overdun, but there was to have been fore  
Wiped yeaster day for playing Wist in skool hours,  
but was Begd off on account of their Lumbargo.

I am sorry to say Ponder has had another Stroak of  
the perrylaticks and has no Use of his Limbs. He is  
Parrs fag—and Parr has got the Roomytx bysides  
very bad but luckily its onely stiffind one Arm so he  
has still Hops to get the Star for Heliocution. Poor  
Dick Coombs eye site has quite gone, or he would  
have a good chance for the Silvur Pen.

Mundy was one of the Feller's Burths Days and we  
was to have a hole Hollday, but he dyed sudnly over  
nite of the appoplxy, and disappinted us very much.  
Two moor was fetcht home last Weak so that we are  
getting very thin partickly when we go out Wauking,  
witch is seldom more than three at a time, their is  
allways so menny in the nusry. I forgot to say Garrat  
run off a month ago, he got verry Home-sick ever  
since his Grandchildeeren cum to sea him at skool,—  
Mr. Grierson has expeld him for running away.

On Tuesday a new Schollard cum. He is a very  
old crusty Chap and not much lick'd, for that resin,  
by the rest of the Boys, whom all Teas him, and call  
him Phig, because he is a retired Grosser. Mr.  
Grierson declind another New Boy because he hadn't  
had the Mizzles. I have red Gay's Febbles and the  
other books you were so kind to send me—and would  
be glad of moor partickly the Gentlemans, with a  
Welsh Whig and a Worming Pan, when you foreward  
my Closebox with my clean Lining, like wise sum

moor Fleasy Hoshery for my legs, and the Cardmums I rit for with the French Grammar, &c. Also weather I am to Dance next quarter. The Gimnystacks is being interdeuced into our Skool, but is so Voilent no one follows them but Old Parr and He cant get up his Pole.

I have no more to rit, but hop this letter will find you as Well as me; Mr. Grierson is in Morning for Mr. Linly Murry, of whose loss you have herd of—  
xcept which he is in Quite good Helth and desires his Respective Complements with witch I remane, YOUR  
DEUTIFUL AND LOVING BROTHER.

P. S.—Barlow and Phigg have just had a fite in the yard about calling names and Phegg has pegged Barlows tooth out, But it was loose before. Mr. G. dont allow Puglism, if he nose it among the Boys, as at their Times of lifes it might be fatle, partickly from puling their Coats of in the open Are.

Our new Husher his cum and is verry well Red in his Mother's tung, witch is the mane thing with Beginers, but We wish the Frentch Master was changed on Account of his Pollyticks and Religun. Brassbrige and him is always Squabling about Bonny-party and the Pop of Room. Has for Barlow we cant tell weather He is a Wig or Tory, for he cant express his Sentyments for Coffing. [31]

### Sydney Smith's Description of the Irish Clergy

The revenue of the Irish Roman Catholic Church is made of halfpence, potatoes, rags, bones, and fragments of old clothes, and those—Irish old clothes. They worship often in hovels, or in the open air, from the *want* of any place of worship. Their religion is the religion of three-fourths of the population! Not far off, in a well-windowed and well-roofed house, is a well-paid Protestant clergyman, preaching to stools and hassocks, and crying *in the wilderness*; near him the clerk, near *him* the sexton, near *him* the sexton's wife—furious against the errors of Popery, and willing to lay down their lives for the great truths established at the Diet of Augsburg. [2]

### A Typical Wooer

It was a young maiden went forth to ride,  
 And there was a wooer to pace by her side ;  
 His horse was so little and hers so high,  
 He thought his angel was up in the sky.

His love was great tho' his wit was small ;  
 He bade her ride easy—and that was all.  
 The very horses began to neigh—  
 Because their betters had nought to say.

They rode by elm, and they rode by oak,  
 They rode by a churchyard, and then he spoke :  
 " My pretty maiden, if you'll agree,  
 You shall always amble through life with me."

The damsel answer'd him never a word,  
 But kicked the grey mare, and away she spurr'd.  
 The wooer still follow'd behind the jade ;  
*And enjoyed—like a wooer—the dust she made.*

They rode thro' moss, and they rode thro' moor,  
 The gallant behind, and the lass before :—  
 And at last they came to a miry place,  
 And there the sad wooer gave up the chase.

Quoth he, " If my nag were better to ride,  
 I'd follow her over the world so wide.  
 Oh, *it is not my love that begins to fail,*  
 But I've lost the last glimpse of the grey mare's  
 tail ! " [31]

### A Gallant Schoolboy's Clever Toast

The Girls ! May they add charity to beauty, subtract envy from friendship, multiply genial affections, divide time by industry and recreation, reduce scandal to its lowest denominator, and raise virtue to its highest power.

### Sheridan's Ability Doubted by His Son

The late R. Brinsley Sheridan threatened to cut his son off with a *shilling*. He immediately replied : " Ah, father, but where will you borrow that shilling ? " This humor, so like his own, procured the desired pardon.

**Sydney Smith on Official Accuracy (Couleur de "Rose")**

The term *official accuracy* has of late days become one of very ambiguous import. Mr. Rose, we can see, would imply by it the highest possible accuracy—as we see *office pens* advertised in the window of a shop, by way of excellence. The public reports of those, however, who have been appointed to look into the manner in which public offices are conducted, by no means justify this usage of the term; and we are not without apprehensions that Dutch politeness, Carthaginian faith, Boeotian genius, and official accuracy may be terms equally current in the world; and that Mr. Rose may, without intending it, have contributed to make this valuable addition to the mass of our ironical phraseology. [2]

**"I'd Like to be a Parson!"**

A curate once did a good thing in his way. While walking along the street at the dinner hour he passed a lot of bricklayers smoking their after-dinner pipe, and heard one of them say :

"I'd like to be a parson, and have naught to do but walk about in a long black coat, and carry a walking stick in my fist, and get a lot of brass."

Of course there was a laugh at the parson's expense, but he turned sharp round and replied :

"So you'd like to be a parson. How much do you get a week?"

"Twenty-seven shillings," was the reply.

"Well," said the curate, "though I'm only a poor man, I'll give you twenty-seven shillings, if you'll come along with me for six days, and see how you like it. Then you'll be better able to talk about it."

The bricklayer tried to back out of it, but his mates told him : "Nay man, thou saidst thou'd like it; thou mun go with the parson chap."

So he put on his coat and started with the curate, amidst a roar of laughter. The parson presently turned down an alley, and told his companion that

they were going to see a sick man, and that he must mind not to make a noise going upstairs.

"What might be the matter with him?" asked the bricklayer.

"Small-pox!" said the parson.

"Oh, then," said the man, "I'll just wait outside for you, sir, for I've not had it myself, and I've got a wife and children to think of."

"That's exactly my case," said the curate; "for I have not had it, and I have a wife and children depending on me. But you agreed to come with me wherever I went."

The man of bricks began not to like it, and after a moment's hesitation he asked: "And where are you going next?"

The parson told him they would have to visit another house that day, where the father lay in his coffin, and all the family were down with scarlet fever, and also a house where there was typhus, and on the morrow there would be a longer round. This floored the bricklayer.

"Sir," he said, "I'll go back to my old job, if you please, and I'll say no more agin you parsons."

So off he went, and, let us hope, he kept his word.

#### Difference Between a "Board" and a "Bench"

A dissenting minister once complaining of the *dealing* he met with from an ecclesiastical *board*, to Rowland Hill, observed that "for his part he did not see the difference between a *board* and a *bench*, meaning that the rule of his *board* was as stringent as that of the bishops.

"Pardon me, my friend," replied Hill, "I will show you a most essential difference between the two; a *board* is a *bench* that has no legs to stand upon." [11]

#### A Tribute to Scotch Frugality

Boswell observing to Johnson that there was no instance of a beggar dying in the streets of Scotland, "I believe, sir, you are very right," says Johnson; "but this does not arise from the want of beggars, but the difficulty of starving a Scotchman." [22]

**Charles II Floored by Stillingfleet**

Charles II was altogether in favor of extempora-neous preaching, and was unwilling to listen to the delivery of written sermons. On one occasion he asked the famous Stillingfleet how it was that he always read his sermons before the court, when he preached without book elsewhere?

Stillingfleet answered something about the awe of so noble a congregation and the presence of so great and wise a prince, with which the king appeared very well satisfied.

"But pray," continued Stillingfleet, "will your majesty give me leave to ask you a question? Why do you read your speeches when you can have none of the same reasons?"

"Why, truly, doctor," answered the king, "your speech is a very pertinent one, and so will be my answer. I have asked the two Houses so often, and for so much money, that I am ashamed to look them in the face."

**Witty Impromptu**

Three or four wits had dined together, and while taking their wine, the subject of impromptu, and the difficulty of finding rhymes for certain names, was discussed.

A general of brigade named Morris, who was also a poet, challenged any of the party to find a rhyme for his name.

The challenge was accepted by an actor present, named Brougham, and the following was the result:

"All hail to thee, thou gifted son,  
The warrior-poet, Morris;  
'Tis seldom that we see in one,  
A Cæsar and a Horace."

**"Agricultural" Boys**

Some one was praising the British public schools to Charles Lamb, and said: "All our best men were public school men. Look at our poets. There's Byron, he was a Harrow boy—" "Yes," interrupted Charles, "and there's Burns—he was a ploughboy."

**How a Preacher both Broke and Kept His Promise**

The Rev. Mr. Adams, of Leominster, was an eccentric character. A neighboring minister—a mild, inoffensive man—with whom he was about to exchange, said to him, knowing the peculiar bluntness of his character—“ You will find some panes of glass broken in the pulpit window, and possibly you may suffer from the cold. The cushion, too, is in a bad condition; but I beg of you not to say anything to my people on the subject; they are poor,” etc.

“ Oh, no! Oh, no! ” said Mr. Adams. But ere he left home, he filled a bag with rags, and took it with him. When he had been in the pulpit a short time, feeling somewhat incommoded by the too free circulation of air, he deliberately took from the bag a handful or two of rags, and stuffed them into the window. Towards the close of his discourse, which was more or less upon the duties of a people towards their clergyman, he became very animated, and purposely brought down both fists with a tremendous force upon the pulpit cushion. The feathers flew in all directions, and the cushion was pretty much used up. He instantly checked the current of his thought, and simply exclaiming, “ Why, how these feathers fly! ” proceeded with his sermon. He had fulfilled his promise of not addressing the society on the subject, but had taught them a lesson not to be misunderstood.

On the next Sabbath the window and cushion were found in excellent repair. [11]

**Tom Sheridan's Adventure**

Tom Sheridan was staying at Lord Craven's at Benham (or rather Hampstead), and one day proceeded on a shooting excursion, like Hawthorne, with only “ his dog and his gun,” on foot, and unattended by companion or keeper; the sport was bad—the birds few and shy—and he walked and walked in search of game, until, unconsciously, he entered the domain of some neighboring squire.

A very short time after, he perceived advancing toward him at the top of his speed, a jolly, comfort-

able-looking gentleman, followed by a servant, armed, as it appeared, for conflict. Tom took up a position, and waited the approach of the enemy.

"Hallo! you, sir," said the squire, when within half earshot, "what are you doing here, sir, eh?"

"I'm shooting sir," said Tom.

"Do you know where you are, sir?" said the squire.

"I'm here, sir," said Tom.

"Here, sir," said the squire, growing angry; "and do you know where here is, sir?" These, sir, are *my* manors; what d'ye you think of that, sir, eh?"

"Why, sir, as to your manners," said Tom, "I can't say they seem over agreeable."

"I don't want any jokes, sir," said the squire. "I hate jokes. Who are you, sir?—what are you?"

"Why sir," said Tom, "my name is Sheridan—I am staying at Lord Craven's—I have come out for some sport—I have not had any, and I am not aware that I am trespassing."

"Sheridan!" said the squire, cooling a little; "Oh, from Lord Craven's, eh? Well, sir, I could not know *that*, sir,—I—"

"No, sir," said Tom, "but you need not have been in a passion."

"Not in a passion! Mr. Sheridan," said the squire, "you don't know, sir, what these preserves have cost me, and the pains and trouble I have been at with them; it's all very well for *you* to talk, but if you were in *my* place I should like to know what *you* would say upon such an occasion."

"Why, sir," said Tom, "if I were in *your* place, under all the circumstances, I should say, 'I am convinced, Mr. Sheridan, you did not mean to annoy me; and as you look a good deal tired, perhaps you will come up to my house and take some refreshment!'"

The squire was hard hit by this nonchalance, and (as the newspapers say), "it is needless to add," acted on Sheridan's suggestion.

"So far," said poor Tom, "the story tells for me—now you shall hear the sequel."

After having regaled himself at the squire's house, and having said five hundred more good things than he swallowed ; having delighted his host, and more than half won the hearts of his wife and daughters, the sportsman proceeded on his return homewards.

In the course of his walk he crossed a farm, on which was a green, in the centre of which was a pond ; in the pond were ducks innumerable swimming and diving ; on its verdant banks a motley group of gallant cocks and pert partlets, picking and feeding. The farmer was leaning over the hatch of the barn, which stood near two cottages on the side of the green.

Tom hated to go back with an empty bag ; and having failed in his attempts at higher game, it struck him as a good joke to ridicule the exploits of the day himself, in order to prevent anyone else from doing it for him, and he thought that to carry home a certain number of the domestic inhabitants of the pond and its vicinity would serve the purpose admirably. Accordingly, up he goes to the farmer and accosts him civilly.

"My good friend," says Tom, "I'll make you an offer."

"Of what, sir?" says the farmer.

"Why," replies Tom, "I've been out all day fagging after birds and haven't had a shot. Now, both my barrels are loaded—I should like to take home something ; what shall I give you to let me have a shot with each barrel at those ducks and fowls—I standing here—and to have whatever I kill ?"

"What sort of shot are you ?" said the farmer.

"Fairish," said Tom, "fairish."

"And to *have* all you kill ?" said the farmer, "eh ?"

"Exactly so," said Tom.

"Half a guinea," said the farmer.

"That's too much," said Tom. "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll give you a seven-shilling piece, which happens to be all the money I have in my pocket."

"Well," said the man, "hand it over."

The payment was made—Tom, true to his bargain, took his post by the barn door, and let fly with one

barrel and then with the other, and such quacking and splashing, and screaming and fluttering had never been seen in that place before.

Away ran Tom and, delighted at his success, picked up first a hen, then a chicken, then fished out a dying duck or two, and so on, until he numbered eight head of domestic game, with which his bag was nobly distended.

"Those were right good shots, sir," said the farmer.

"Yes," said Tom, "eight ducks and fowls were more than you bargained for, old fellow—worth rather more, I suspect, than seven shillings, eh?"

"Why, yes," said the man, scratching his head, "I think they be; but what do I care for that—*they are none of mine!*"

"Here," said Tom, "I was for once in my life beaten and made off as fast as I could, for fear the right owner of my game might make his appearance—not but that I could have given the fellow that took me in seven times as much as I did, for his cunning and coolness."

[28]

### A Prisoner Pleading for His Lawyer

*Judge:* "Have you anything to say before the court passes sentence upon you?"

*Prisoner:* "Well, all I've to say is, I hope yer honor'll consider the extreme youth of my lawyer, an' let me off easy."

### Using His Wit to Hide His Ignorance

The clerk of a retired parish in North West Devon, who had to read the first lesson, always used to make a hash of Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego; and, as the names are twelve times repeated in the third chapter of Daniel, after getting through with them the first time, he afterwards styled them the "aforesaid gentlemen."

[11]

### What the Waits Ought to Do on Boxing Day

Bartley, the eminent actor, was called upon by the midnight minstrels on the morning of Boxing Day.

"We are the parish waits, an' please you," said the spokesman, "we played before your door last night."

"You did, indeed," was his reply in mournful tones; and he looked upon his visitors with the air of a man who knew not their errand.

"We have come to hope, sir," went on the clarionet, "for your kind contribution."

"Oh, dear," said Bartley, with affected surprise, "I thought you had come to apologize."

### Native Wit *versus* Norman Blood

Not long since a certain noble peer in Yorkshire, who is fond of boasting of his Norman descent, thus addressed one of his tenants who, he thought, was not speaking to him with proper respect.

"Do you not know that my ancestors came over with William the Conqueror?"

"And, mayhaps," retorted the sturdy Saxon, nothing daunted, "that they found mine here when they comed."

The noble lord felt that he had the worst of it.

### Johnson's Definition of Music

A lady, after performing with the most brilliant execution, a sonata on the pianoforte in the presence of Dr. Johnson, turning to the philosopher, took the liberty of asking him if he was fond of music? "No madam," replied the doctor; "but of all noises I think music is the least disagreeable."

### Anxious to Put in a Good Word

A favorite story was told by Douglas Jerrold of the footboy who accompanied him on his trip to Derbyshire. At the inn at Matlock, "master" was praising a glass of port, when the boy chimed in, glad to hear the hotel praised:

"Please, sir, I thinks they makes their own port. *I know* they brews." [25]

### Clever Contrivance to Obtain a Warm Seat

A gentleman came into an inn at Chelmsford upon a very cold day and could get no room near the fire; whereupon he called to the ostler to fetch a peck of oysters and give them to his horse.

"Will your horse eat oysters?" replied the ostler.

"Try him," said the gentleman.

Immediately, the people running to see this wonder, the fireside was cleared and the gentleman had his choice of the seats. The ostler brought back the oysters and said the horse would not meddle with them.

"Why, then," says the gentleman, "I must be forced to eat them myself."

### **An Exposed Intellect**

Sydney Smith observed how many of the most eminent men of the world had been diminutive in person; and after naming several among the ancients, he added, "Why, look there at Jeffrey, and there is my little friend —, who has not body enough to cover his mind decently with; his intellect is improperly exposed." [2]

### **The Shortest Grace**

A discussion arose between three boys as to whose father said the shortest grace. The first boy said, "*My father says 'Thank God!'*"

"Oh!" said the second, "mine says 'Amen!'"

The third said, "Ah, but mine's the best of all; he just pushes his plate away, and says '*There!*'"

### **Fine Air—But Not Fine Enough**

A bishop congratulating a poor parson, said he lived in a fine air.

"Yes, my lord," replied he, "I should think so, too, if one could live upon it as well as in it."

### **Making Up with Wit what He Lacked in Stature**

Dr. Busby, whose figure was beneath the common size, was one day accosted in a public coffee-room by an Irish baronet of colossal stature, with "May I pass to my seat, O giant?"

When the doctor, politely making way, replied, "Pass, O pigmy!"

"Oh, sir," said the baronet, "my expression alluded to the *size of your intellect*."

"And my expression, sir," said the doctor, "to the *size of yours*."

### Capturing a Deserter Thirty Years After the Offence

During the early part of his life Douglas Jerrold was a midshipman, and once while the commander was absent two of the men in the midshipman's charge, requested permission to make some trifling purchase. The good-natured officer assented, adding :

" By the way, you may as well buy me some apples and a few pears."

" All right, sir," said the men ; and they departed.

The captain presently returned, and still the seamen were away on their errand. They were searched for, but they could not be found. They had deserted. Any naval reader whose eye may wander over this page will readily imagine the disgrace into which Midshipman Douglas Jerrold fell with his captain. Upon the young delinquent the event made a lasting impression, and years after he talked about it with that curious excitement which lit up his face when he spoke about anything he had felt. He remembered even the features of the two deserters ; as he had, most unexpectedly an opportunity of proving.

The midshipman had long put his dirk aside and washed the salt from his brave face. He had become a fighter with a keener weapon than his dirk had ever proved, when, one day strolling eastward, possibly from the office of his own newspaper to the printing premises of Messrs. Bradbury & Evans, in Whitefriars, he was suddenly struck with the form and face of a baker, who, with his load of bread at his back, was examining some object in the window of the surgical-instrument maker who puzzles so many inquisitive passers-by, near the entrance to King's College. There was no mistake. Even the flour dredge could not hide the fact. The ex-midshipman walked nimbly to the baker's side, and, rapping him sharply upon the back, said :

" I say, my friend, don't you think you have been rather a long time about that fruit ? "

The deserter's jaw fell. Thirty years had not

calmed the unquiet suggestions of his conscience. He remembered the fruit and the little middy, for he said :

"Lor'! is it you, sir?"

The midshipman went on his way, laughing. [25]

### Theodore Hook's Power of Improvisation

Words cannot do justice to Theodore Hook's talent for improvisation ; it was perfectly wonderful. He was one day sitting at the pianoforte, singing an extempore song as fluently as if he had had the words and music before him, when Moore happened to look into the room, and Hook instantly introduced a long parenthesis,

"And here's Mr. Moore,  
Peeping in at the door," etc. [30]

### Fragmentary Classical Fun

The characteristics of an epigram were once most emphatically laid down thus :

"*Omne epigramma sit instar apis, sit aculeus illi,  
Sint sua mella, sit et corporis exigui ;*"

which have been variously rendered, thus :

"The qualities rare in a bee that we meet,  
In an epigram never should fail :  
The body should always be little and sweet  
And a *sting* should be left in its tail ;"

or better still, perhaps,

"An epigram should be, if right,  
Short, simple, pointed, keen, and bright  
A lively little thing  
Like a wasp with taper body, bound  
By lines—not many—neat and round,  
All ending in a *sting*."

Here is an epigram from Martial's first book, which certainly complies with this rule :

"I love thee not; but why I can't display;  
I love thee not, is all that I can say."

In imitation of this epigram, an Oxford wit wrote the following on Dr. John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, who died in 1686 :

"I do not love thee, Dr. Fell,  
The reason why I cannot tell ;  
But this I'm sure I know full well,  
I do not love thee, Dr. Fell."

---

Here is an epigram where, as is not always or often the case, the play on words can be preserved. It is translated by Mr. Theodore Martin, and may be called :

*Security*

Dear Furius, you may rest assured  
My country house is well secured.  
How ? With good timber, stone and plaster,  
From wind, and rain, and all disaster ?  
Ah no, but by a certain skin  
Which is encased in painted tin ;  
It is secured for money lent  
To a curst son of ten-per-cent.  
*The house was mortgaged !*

---

Martial flattered Domitian ; but Ben Johnson out-Martialed Martial.

*To Martial's Ghost*

Martial, thou gav'st far nobler epigrams  
To thy Domitian than I to my James ;  
But in my royal subject I pass thee.  
Thou flatteredst thine ; mine cannot flattered be !

---

Here is one of Martial's happiest sketches, consummately rendered by Addison. It is from Book xii. :

"In all thy humors, whether grave or mellow,  
Thou'rt such a touchy, testy, pleasant fellow ;  
Hast so much wit, and mirth, and spleen about thee,  
There is no living with thee—or without thee."

It is thought that this epigram might have suggested Goldsmith's sketch of Garrick's character in the epigrammatic poem "Retaliolation : "

" Our Garrick's a salad ; for in him we see  
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltiness agree." [32]

### "Fast" Day

An eccentric Dominie, Matthew Byles, seems to have been as inveterate a joker as Sydney Smith. Upon a Fast-day, Dr. Byles had negotiated an exchange with a country clergyman. Upon the appointed morning each of them—for vehicles were not common then—proceeded on horseback to his respective place of appointment. Dr. Byles no sooner observed his brother clergyman approaching at a distance, than he applied the whip, put his horse into a gallop, and with his canonicals flying all abroad, passed his friend at full run. "*What is the matter?*" he exclaimed, raising his hand in astonishment; "*why so fast, Brother Byles?*" To which the doctor, without slackening his speed, replied over his shoulder, "*It is Fast-day!*" [11]















